**False Teaching In The Church**

**1) Progressive (liberal) Christianity** – *“Just as Liberal Christianity inevitably produced the errors and heresies of Liberal Theology, so Progressive Christianity produces its own errors and heresies in Progressive Theology as it adulterates historical and biblical orthodoxy. It does this – in a method poached from Liberal Christianity – by embracing the novelty of a culture-focused Mission for Christ’s Church as superior to the Word of God. This theological downgrade is not only manifested by a loss of Confessional integrity in general, but by the theological devolution of the Christ-given and Gospel-defined Message and Mission of His Church.”* – Harry Reeder III

 **A) Marks of Progressive Christianity (not all PC’s hold to all of these points):**

1) They question the historical events of the Bible – Virgin birth, Noah’s flood, etc.

2) They, because they wonder about certain historical events, question the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture.

3) They attempt to wed evolutionary thought with Genesis. This is known as Theistic Evolution. Many within the church accept this belief.

4) They may offer alternatives to salvation beyond just Christ. They are weak on the Gospel as it is taught in **1 Cor. 15**.

5) They overlook or define in their terms, Biblical statements regarding cultural issues (Gender identity, immigration, abortion, sexual orientation).

6) They put feelings over Biblical exegesis.

7) They may promote social justice over the need to challenge people on sin and redemption. In fact, they connect things such as the Covid vaccine, your view on climate change and immigration, to the Gospel and “loving our neighbors.” There was an SBC pastor who likened following mask mandates during Covid to “picking up your cross.” This is totally ripping Scripture out of context. “Picking up your cross” has to do with being willing to be identified with Christ, at times that includes persecution, suffering.

8) They redefine Biblical terminology and doctrine.

9) They look down on those who challenge them as not being as educated as they are. If you are a conservative theologically, they usually mock you.

 **B) Some key figures in the movement:**

**1) Andy Stanley:**

 **A) His thoughts on the Bible:** The following are quotes and views that are well-known that are promoted by Stanley.

\*\* *“If you were raised on a version of Christianity that relied on the Bible as the foundation of faith, a version that was eventually dismantled by academia or the realities of life, maybe it’s time for you to change your mind about Jesus. Maybe it’s time for you to consider the version of Christianity that relies on the event of the resurrection of Jesus as its foundation. If you gave up your faith because of something about or in the Bible, maybe you gave up unnecessarily.”* – From a series he did called “Aftermath”

\*\* Stanley does not believe that the church had a “Bible” until the fourth century:

“This is something I’m trying desperately to help people understand and every time I try to explain it I get misunderstood so here I go again. There was no “The Bible” until the fourth century. When we think about the Bible we think about a book that contains the Jewish Scripture and the Christian writings and such a thing did not exist until after Christianity became legal and scholars could come out of the shadows and actually put such a thing together.”

“…no one ever said in the early church, ‘the Bible says, the Bible teaches, the Bible says the Bible teaches,’ because there was no ‘The Bible.’ But the point of your question, there was Scripture but every time we see the phrase ‘the Scripture’ or ‘Scripture’ in the New Testament, as you know we have to stop and ask the question, what was this particular group of people referring to because there was no ‘The Bible’ and there was no book that contained all the Jewish Scripture because it was contained in synagogues and as you know virtually no one could read and write.”

**Response:** Here are some things to note regarding the thought that we did not have the “Bible until the fourth century: Note the following quotes from the early church and some of their leaders.

1) Peter, in **2 Peter 3:15-16**, refers to Paul’s writings as “Scripture.”

2) **1 Tim. 5:18** is a quote from **Deut. 25:4** and **Luke 10:7**. See also **1 Thess. 2:13-16**.

3) No early church council determined which books would be the canon of Scripture. Local councils were circulating the writings of the apostles and the Old Testament. In fact, in the early 300’s, the emperor Diocletian ordered Christians to hand over their Bibles so they could be burned.

4) Theophilus, bishop of Antioch (177 A.D.) – *“Concerning the righteousness which the law enjoined, confirmatory utterances are found both with the prophets and in the Gospels, because they all spoke inspired by one Spirit of God.”*

5) Justin Martyr (150-160 A.D.) – *“And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things.”*

6) Polycarp, a disciple of John the Apostle, around 110 A.D. quotes from **Ephesians 4:26**, and calls it Scripture.

7) Jesus quoted often from the OT.

 **B) Additional thoughts on Scripture from Stanley:**

\*\* He actually claimed in 2016 that the church veered into “trouble” when it began to make its arguments on the basis of the Bible. He cited “deconversion” stories in which people told him that they lost their Christian faith when they lost confidence in the Bible. He said: *“If the Bible is the foundation of your faith, here’s the problem: it’s all or nothing. Christianity becomes a fragile house of cards religion.”*

\*\* *“Now, for you and me, it is much easier for us to embrace all of those things as historical primarily because of how we were raised, but I totally get when a 25-year-old or a 35-year-old comes to faith in Jesus and then starts reading the Old Testament. They’re kind of looking like, ‘Really?’ Well, you know, that’s difficult, but that doesn’t undermine my faith, and I would never press somebody to say, ‘Well if you can’t accept all of it as historically true, then you can’t really be a Christian.’ I think that’s a little bit absurd.”* – (Underlines by me).

\*\* In early 2015, Zondervan released a series of Bible study lessons by Andy Stanley titled Starting Point.  You can see the sessions on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFTHf1HXIng) where he casts doubt upon the trustworthiness and reliability of the Bible in his opening statements.

In fact, Andy Stanley went as far as to say, *“We went off to college and discovered that even though it [the Bible] was sacred, it wasn’t scientific.  Even though it was something to appreciate, it wasn’t necessarily something that was factual.  Even though there were stories in here [the Bible] that were inspirational, they weren’t necessarily true.”* Just like that, he casts doubt upon the reliability of sacred Scripture and points people away from God’s Word. Sound familiar? That’s precisely the method of Satan from the beginning.

\*\* In 2016, on Easter Sunday, Andy Stanley opened [his s](http://northpoint.org/messages/easter-2016/)[ermon](https://youtu.be/0uHTjVJUryU?si=CHbgl-cQM57ADEHJ) with a statement that was aimed mostly at the unbeliever.  He said, *“If you said to me one-on-one, ‘Andy, I’m not a Christian, I’m not a Jesus follower, but I’m going to let you take your best shot at convincing me to follow Jesus’ – Here’s what I wouldn’t do…I wouldn’t try to defend a lot of things that Christians have said or the ways that Christians have treated you….and I wouldn’t try to convince you with the Bible.”*

\*\* I read the following from a posting about one of his sermons. We know that Stanley is clear that there are parts of the Bible he considers to not be true, such as the walls of Jericho falling down or the exodus from Egypt happening as it is explained to us in Scripture. He picks and chooses what events happened and what did not.

**Response:** He leaves out the cross in his preaching, which is important for the resurrection, which he hinges everything on. But he also makes believing in the Bible optional. He says that if we can believe in the beginning of the universe and the resurrection, it makes believing in the other miracles far more acceptable (see below). This is nonsense. He leaves open the view that we can also deny those miracles found in the Bible, such as Noah’s Ark or a worldwide flood, etc.

 **C) For Stanley, the resurrection is the key. That is where he would start.**

He then stated following the previous quote, with*, “I would start with the resurrection of Jesus.”*

**Response:** Why is it that Andy Stanley seems to distance himself from the Bible? **From 1 Corinthians 15:3-4**, Paul’s entire foundation of Christian hope in the resurrection is rooted and grounded in the Scriptures, but Stanley points people away from the Bible to the resurrection as if you can arrive at the empty tomb of Christ apart from God’s Word. Though there is history regarding the resurrection, we need the Bible to understand it.

In **Lk. 24:13-35** Jesus walks with two men on the road to Emmaus and note specifically **vs. 27**. It says, **“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”** See **Acts 17:2; Rom. 15:4; 1 Tim. 4:13**.

**Response:** The following undercuts Stanley’s statements regarding the early church and their view of Scripture and understanding the apostle’s writings and the idea there was no Bible until the fourth century. This information and summary comes from a book that was noted in an article I read, the author being **Herman Ridderbos** and the book, **“Redemptive History and the New Testament Scriptures.”**

*“In short, they would have seen just these writings as being inspired by the same Spirit who inspired the writers of the Old Testament, and hence what came to be known as the New Testament was repeatedly copied, because it was inspired…They believed both that what they were copying was inspired and true.” (****It must be noted, and this is added by me, that Stanley wants to separate things that historically have not been separated****. This allows him, as is pointed out in the article, to reject certain parts of the Old Testament.*

*“Christians in the first three centuries were collecting, copying, reading, retelling and following the writings that are in the New Testament. By Stanley’s own reckoning all the books of the NT were written before 70 AD and were copied and recopied because they were believed to be true, but not inspired. What Stanley gives with his right hand in the first part of his message, he tries to take away when it comes to how people came to faith in Christ.*

*“After the apostolic period, there were no more eyewitnesses to the life and resurrection of Jesus. It is for this reason that the church gathered together the writings of those commission by Jesus by Jesus to be His spokesmen: The apostles. The church was founded upon the death and resurrection of Jesus through the teachings of the apostles. Those teachings were given initially by both word of mouth and in writing.”*

 **D) Stanley believes you only have to believe in two miracles to become a Christian.** Those are the miracle of the universe and the resurrection. The hope is that you will come to believe in all the miracles, which, by the way, are pretty important in supporting Christ and His ministry. (Watch the videos on this)

\*\* *“And so if you’re not a Christian or you used to be, or you’re reconsidering faith, or you’re considering faith for the first time, I wanna actually, it’s kind of a strange place to start a series, I wanna begin with this question. I wanna answer this one now: Do you have to believe in miracles to be a Christian?

And the answer is ‘yes,’ but you only have to believe in two miracles to be a Christian.

So I wanna talk about those two. And there’s a reason for that, and that’s gonna become clear over the course of the next few minutes. And the interesting thing about these two miracles that you have to believe in to be a Christian, is most of you and most people in the world actually already believe in one of them. And if you accept that, the second miracle that you have to believe to be a Christian, if you accept the second one, it opens the door to making the other miracles far more acceptable.”*

\*\* The following is a quote by Andy Stanley on Genesis,

***“This is very important. The Genesis account of creation, the point of that isn’t ‘here’s how God did it.’ The point of that, is*that *God did it****. And the reason we know that, is because it stood in stark contrast to the Sumerian and Babylonian and the Canaanite and the Egyptian creation myths. And in all of their myths, the gods just sort of appeared magically out of nowhere or they created themselves or they created each other.

And then, Yahweh says, “hang on, I created it all out of nothing. I didn’t use body parts, okay? I didn’t split (the primordian Goddess Tiamat) in half and their lower half became the earth and the upper half became the heavens. I mean that’s foolishness. There’s one God. I’m God. I did it.’ That’s the point of the Genesis creation account.”*

*He is wrong. Genesis not only tells us about the creation account, but it also tells us how God did it – “And God said…”*

**Response:** Genesis is not connected to other religions and God does not accommodate Himself to us as Stanley says God did by downplaying the ability of ancient people to understand what the Lord was saying. He downplays what God said. Read **Gen. 4** if you think ancient civilizations were stupid. He gets the idea that we don’t know about the resurrection from the Bible, but vice-versa. Where does he think we got our information regarding the resurrection?

**Response:** The problem is that Stanley leaves open the door for evolution as part of the process of creation. He always tries to connect certain truths taught in Scripture with pagan beliefs, as if the Bible somehow got some of what we read from them. Jesus Himself said that if you do not believe me, believe the signs that point to what I am doing. Stanley makes believing in the other miracles of the Bible “optional.”

 **E) Stanley’s attempts to wed cultural beliefs with the Bible:**

\*\* They platform at their “Unconditional” conferences on sexuality two married gay men who serve in their church. Though Stanley argues for a traditional view of marriage, what the church practices says otherwise.

**2) David Platt:**

\*\* More than theological, Platt’s problem is that he has been caught in deceptive lies. His claiming McLean Bible Church did not become a part of the Southern Baptist Convention to his pushing critical race theory, to the mishandling of money and how the church operated, Platt has been caught in falsehood after falsehood. He is also an example of being a “woke pastor” as we shall see. Also, McLean’s constitution required it to not affiliate with a denomination.

\*\* Millions of dollars went to various organizations, including over $200,000 one year to Platt’s own ministry, “Radical,” and the church treasurer claims he did not know where much of it was going.

\*\* Several million dollars went to the Southern Baptist Convention. He also pushed Social Justice bigtime at McLean. Mike Kelsey, a pastor at McLean, said there were times he wanted to “torch white people” and he also demanded reparations. Both Platt and Kelsey supported and marched in BLM rallies where Kelsey held up a “Black Lives Matter” sign. Here is the quote from Kelsey, *“Totally honest, being angry about the situation but it is difficult for me sometimes not to just torch all white people because particularly white evangelicals and Christians.”*

\*\* My issues with Platt are more based on his character – his lies about the SBC, his handling of people who disagree with him. His woke agenda. He purposely wanted to make the staff of McLean more diversified, which is fine if it does not have cultural leanings behind it, which his thinking did.

\*\* Platt, in his book on voting that he gave out to McLean Bible Church ahead of the 2020 election, which some of the elders advised him not to do, but he ignored them. He then charged the church for print costs, does allow the possibility of voting for a candidate who supports abortion, which earlier in the book he admits is not Biblical. His reasoning is seen in this quote, which is liberal theology,

*“No Christian would be a Democrat if the only issue involved in an election was abortion. If that was the case, then every Christian’s choice would be clear. But abortion is not the only issue involved in an election, particularly for the President of the United States. Every Christian has a host of issues to weigh in a presidential election. Consider a short and non-exhaustive list of political issues: judicial appointments, gun control, gender identity, government mandates, drug policy, social security, social media regulation, net neutrality, minimum wage, government spending, corporate tax, capital gains tax, property tax, pension reform, labor unions, tariffs, immigration, border wall, border security, campaign financing, foreign lobbying, healthcare, Medicaid, marijuana use, veterans affairs, elementary to college education, climate change, oil drilling, alternative energy, nuclear energy, space exploration, foreign aid, foreign elections, the UN, NATO, NSA, prison reform, police reform, drug trafficking, public transportation, and … well, I trust you get the point.”*

\*\* Platt also bemoaned the fact that McLean was too white. Well, before he came there and when Lon Solomon was pastor, on any given Sunday 130 countries were represented at McLean, not just in attendance but in various ministries. This shows how out of touch the woke Platt is with the people.

\*\* Race was never discussed at McLean before Platt. People migrated to McLean because they knew they would hear the Word of God and be accepted. There was no attempt to separate people until Platt came along.

\*\* Platt’s book “Radical” challenged Christians to live with less so as to have money to spread the Gospel, for people to go on missions, while he himself does not live that way. He claims to have such a heart for the world, yet when he was the head of the International Mission Board, they cut the missionary force. He has not lived the way he told others to. He is the master of guilt-shaming, whether the issue is race or anything else.

\*\* However, now, he lives in a lovely home. I understand that MBC originally purchased this home for their “radical” new pastor for $835,000. It has gone up in price. He purchased the home from McLean in 2023 for $1.1 million.

*Now he owns a $1.1 million home while the average American home in 2023 is worth $412,000 and the average Virginia home is worth $413,000 and the average home in Washington, DC is worth $626,000,*[*according to data published by Forbes*](https://www.forbes.com/advisor/mortgages/real-estate/median-home-prices-by-state/)*.*

*“Platt preached a December 3, 2023, sermon wondering how many Americans have a blind spot because of material comforts.*[*He said*](https://web.archive.org/web/20231217152047/https%3A/radical.net/podcasts/radical-podcast/deceptive-danger-of-wealth/)*,****“I wonder if followers of Jesus a hundred years from now, if Jesus has not returned, will look back at Christians in America today and wonder, ‘How could they worship, sing, study the Bible and live in such affluence, while billions of people were going to hell without even hearing how they could go to heaven, many of whom were living in impoverished, dire conditions on earth? They gathered for worship, they read the Bible, they sang the songs, they lived what they said were Christian lives. How could they keep prioritizing their comforts and preferences to the neglect of so many people in need?”***

\*\* Watch the two-part documentary if you get the chance, “The Real David Platt.”

**3) William Lane Craig:**

William Lane Craig wrote a book, “In Quest Of The Historical Adam.” This book and other words and teachings by him have shown him to be nothing more than a liberal, progressive, theologian. Note the following comments he makes, both on video and in print.

\*\* Sadly, Sean McDowell had Craig on to speak about his views on Genesis and Adam and did not challenge anything Craig said per se. He made it an “agree to disagree” issue of Adam’s beginnings. The fact is, what you think of **Gen. 1-11** is foundational to our faith. But Craig has drifted in other areas as well as we shall see.

\*\* Craig sees **Genesis 1-11** as “mytho-history.” Some things written are historical, some are not, or we should not read too much into the literalness of the text. He scoffs at Eve being made out of Adam’s rib, comparing it to something like a “Frankenstein” experiment, or Adam’s descendants living as long as they did. He forgets that sin, as it was passed down through the ages, took a toll on humanity.

\*\* He claims that **Gen. 12** and on is historical. It is the first eleven chapters that he has issues with.

\*\* He denies the Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Bible. He refers to the “Pentateuchal author” without naming him, yet the NT points to Moses as the author of the first five books of the Bible. **Jn. 5:45-47** are the words of Jesus and He states that Moses wrote about Christ though He does not mention Gen.-Deuteronomy by name.

\*\* Other verses that point to Moses as the author of the Pentateuch include **Jn. 7:19; Mk. 12:26; Acts 3:22**. These reference passages of the first five books.

\*\* Throughout the OT, Moses was noted as the author of the Pentateuch **(Josh. 1:7-8; Josh. 23:6)**.

\*\* If Adam is non-historical from the Biblical perspective, then **Rom. 5** is wrong. Jesus is the last Adam, so there had to be a first one. Of course, Craig and others will argue that Adam and Eve were unique, but that they evolved. They were not created as Scripture states.

\*\* He questions whether the NT writers using the people of the OT like Moses, Adam, etc., are speaking of these individuals as historical. The writers of the NT spoke of people like Jonah, etc. as being historical figures. He tries to use the argument of Jewish folklore, a strawman, as ways to question historical figures of the NT.

\*\* He believes that Adam lived between 750,000 and 1,000,000 years ago as a member of the archaic human species *Homo heidelbergensis.* His view is because he holds to an evolutionary history of mankind, that though Adam was unique, he came from a lower species of humans. Craig is definitely an evolutionist when it comes to Creation.

**4) Other notable progressive Christians**

\*\* Rick Warren, Russell Moore, Curtis Chang, David French, Beth Moore, Francis Collins, most denominations (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Free Methodist as examples – not everyone within those groups would be liberal, but there is a movement within these denominations that definitely are. We will discuss groups such as this, the fall of Bible colleges and why they have drifted, along with more bad, dumpster fire theology, etc., in the fall seminar).

**\*\* New Apostolic Reformation (NAR):**

**1) Opening Remarks:**

 **1) Talk about them calling Olive out of the grave, the sadness behind that.** This is typical of the NAR.

 **2) Key figures in the movement** include Bill Johnson (I think he is the most well-known and looked-to leader of the movement), Kris Vallotton, Che Ahn, Rick Joiner, Kim Clement, Lou Engle, Shawn Bolz (the facts are out that he data mines for his prophecies), Cindy Jacobs, Heidi Baker, Bill Hamon.

 **3) The movement began with C. Peter Wagner**, though the current leaders distance themselves from him for who knows why. Wagner felt that the reason the church wasn’t doing what it should was because we did not have apostles and prophets and all the supernatural stuff that goes with that. That was his estimation.

 **4) NAR is not a denomination.** They are a loosely-knit group with many of the same beliefs that are found across churches, and there are networks of NAR leaders who oversee pastors and churches and give guidance. Many of these individuals look to Bethel Church in Redding, Cal. as their model. Over three million people supposedly are involved in NAR churches or teaching. Some attend churches with NAR influence, though that local assembly of believers may not be fully into the movement.

 **5) They believe that apostles and prophets are the leaders of the church**, and that even pastors of other churches should submit to an apostle. And these leaders, in my looking at the movement, are not accountable to anyone. Kris Vallotton of Bethel Church said, *“we are moving from denominationalism to apostleship. . . the cool thing is if you didn’t put me in, you can’t take me out.”* (think of the ramifications of that. They basically are untouchable unless they horrifically sin, and even in some cases, that does not keep them out of ministry).

\*\* Vallotton says about his calling to be a prophet, *“Jesus walked into my bathroom amid my evening bath and told me, “I have called you to be a prophet to the nations. You will speak before kings and queens. You will influence prime ministers and presidents. I will open doors for you to talk to mayors, governors, ambassadors, and government officials all around the world.”*

\*\* Vallotton prays and thanks God for himself. I have seen this on a video myself. This is how these prophets and apostles act. They are special, more spiritual than we are. Prophets and apostles are vital and are ones who receive special revelation and prophecies for the church though they claim we should all be prophesying.

\*\* The goal of the NAR is to retake the world for Christ. They want to hasten the return of the Lord by taking charge. This is their version of the Gospel. It is not enough to be saved. The goal is to bring the kingdom of God to earth through supernatural signs and wonders. This adds to the Gospel noted in **1 Cor. 15:1-4**.

 **6) There is a mockery of God and His Word**, a misuse and misinterpretation of Scripture, and just an irreverent respect for the Lord – teachings such as being drunk in the Spirit, unfulfilled prophecies, waking up angels as if they sleep and are not doing their job, “declaration” prayers where we can, through our prayers and faith, make things happen, decree things to be that are not, etc. Basically, we can control God.

**2) Key Beliefs (These will differ depending on who you read or listen to and this not a comprehensive list by any means):**

 **1) Healing is expected and it is God’s will to always heal.** There are no exceptions. This is a teaching of NAR, and specifically, of Bethel Church, the mothership of this movement. Note that Bill Johnson wears glasses and his wife Beni, sadly, died of cancer in 2022. As we shall see, the Word of Faith movement believes the same thing. Kenneth Copeland has a pacemaker and hearing aids, while others wear glasses. They have their “explanations” about “why” they wear glasses, etc., but ultimately it goes against their theology.

*“The goodness of God requires that it is always His will to heal. (This is one of the revelations God has supposedly given the church through today’s “apostles” and “prophets.”) Believing that to be true, thousands of people desperate for healing have made the trek to Redding, California, or to other “revival” hot spots. But they’ve returned home—sadly, as sick and suffering as ever.*

*The NAR teaching that it is God’s will to heal everyone does vastly more harm than good.*

*Take the tragic case of Nabeel Qureshi. Nabeel had been a devout Muslim, but—after discovering evidence for Christ’s resurrection and Jesus’s claims to be God—he converted to Christianity. He wrote a book describing his dramatic transformation, the New York Times bestseller Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus. But in 2016, when he was just thirty-three years old, he was diagnosed with advanced stomach cancer. A devoted husband and father to a young daughter, he wanted desperately to live. So, at the urging of friends, he traveled to Bethel Church seeking healing. We know this because he talked about his visit to Bethel—and his hopes that he would find healing there—during a series of vlogs he uploaded to YouTube documenting his battle with cancer.*

*“During his visit to Bethel, about 1,700 people made “prayer declarations” for his healing at a service. “We thank you that he is even now being healed,” declared a leader from the stage. But sadly, less than a year later, Nabeel died of the devastating disease.*

*The failure for Nabeel to be healed at Bethel was damaging for the reputation of the church—though Bethel leaders never acknowledged this publicly and they still claim that people are being healed at the church all the time. You would think that if anybody were truly going to be healed at Bethel it certainly would have been Nabeel. Because of his status as a well-known author, people throughout the world were watching his YouTube updates, including many Muslims. If God healed Nabeel of cancer and extended his life, it would prove to his Muslim viewers the truth of Christianity—at least that was what some of his Christian friends thought. It would allow him to continue his powerful apologetics ministry. And it would prove the truth of NAR teachings about healing to those who are skeptical.”* – Holly Pivec and R. Douglas Geivett, “Counterfeit Kingdom: The Dangers of New Revelation, New Prophets, and New Age Practices in the Church”

\*\* There is the supposed “three toes miracle.” There was never any proof shown of three toes growing on the foot of a woman who had lost them via gunshot from her former crazy husband. When Bill Johnson came to James River Church in Missouri and spoke at one of the campuses of that church, this supposed miracle took place. There is a website, “showmethetoes.com” that challenges that this “miracle” happened. You would think that a supernatural event such as this would be publicly noted so people would believe.

**How Should We Respond:** **First**, we must ask for proof of supposed miracle healings, ones that can be seen, and ones that stay healed. When Jesus healed, until people died, we do not read of them becoming unhealed.

**Second**, Because NAR prophets and apostles do not check out these miraculous claims for authenticity, but simply accept them and must be noted from Scripture that God does not always heal. Just read **Phil. 2:25-27** about Epaphroditus. See **2 Tim. 4:20**. In NAR, if you “lose” your healing, it is on you for not having enough faith.

**Third**, they claim that Jesus healed everyone who came to Him therefore we should expect healing. Jesus is the filter, the perfect theology, according to Johnson. Anything that seems to go contrary to what Christ said or did is subject to Jesus and how He did things.

As we noted in the previous point, in the pages of the NT, God did not always heal. Jesus healed to validate Who He was (**Jn. 10:36-38**), but other passages, such as **2 Cor. 12:7-10; Gal. 4:13-14; Phil. 2:25-27; 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20** show that God does not always heal. Jesus is God, and He is not separate from the Father or the Spirit. Healing is according to God’s will, not man’s.

 **2) The Apostles and Prophets are the two main offices of the church.** Pastors are to submit to apostles. If you do not have an apostle and you are a pastor, find one. The prophets receive new revelation from God and we are to submit to the words they say. There are no new modern-day apostles. You had to have seen the resurrected Christ **(Rom. 1:5)**. You had to personally be with Christ throughout His ministry **(Acts 1:21-22)** or known someone who had seen the resurrected Christ.

 A) Failed or “wide net” prophecies, and prophecies in general, are huge in this movement. Here are a few prophecies that have failed or are so general there is no way to check them out.

* Many of these NAR prophets claimed that President Trump would win re-election in 2020 and regardless of what happened, would be put in office after that election. Kris Vallotton had to apologize for claiming this. It was a false prophecy.
* Brian Carn, founder of Kingdom City Church in Charlotte, NC and other places, is one of those who makes these wide net prophetic statements. Let me show us some of his “prophetic words.” Here are some of his prophecies from 2020.

*1) A shocking discovery by the end of August to revel a great secret that will create a stir.*

*2) A famous preacher has heart problems in 2020 and will take a break from ministry.*

*3) A famous 1980s star dies in 2020 who was a big name* (From the entertainment world).

*4) New President will be the talk of the town. But will it happen? President Trump will become president once again. After him there will be someone from the Democratic Party or Independent Party coming into power.*

 **3) They have the seven-mountain mandate.** Their goal is to bring heaven to earth. The idea is that seven key areas of culture are to be under the control of Christians. The seven areas, according to C. Peter Wagner and others in NAR are, “Religion, Family, Education, Government, Media, Arts & Entertainment, and Business. The goal is for Christians to use their influence to create an environment in which the blessings and prosperity of the Kingdom of God can permeate all areas of society."

\*\* The goal is to bring heaven to earth, to build God’s kingdom through controlling these areas of the culture. They will help bring in the millennium and will help rule on the earth. Jesus will return after the millennium (a view held by some in the NAR).

*“According to this view, believers advance God's kingdom by taking over seven “mountains” of culture: education, religion, family, business, government, entertainment, and media, and so taking over society. This means prosperous businesses play a role in taking over the business mountain and channeling the world's wealth into the kingdom. It also has political implications since politicians who advance agendas favored by the NAR are part of bringing about this dominionist kingdom of God.”* – Joel Nisly

 **4) They believe we all should be able to prophesy and heal.** That is taught at Bethel. In their school, and I believe in their church, they say if you have not had three false prophecies then you have not actually prophesied. Yet false prophecies abound and healings do not always occur. Of course, the blame is put on the individual who needed healing. This is guilt-shaming at its worse.

**Point:** They teach at Bethel that you have to make mistakes when it comes to prophesying so that you can learn. Imagine someone telling you something in the name of the Lord that ends up not being true nor happening. The OT gives no leeway for false prophecies. One false statement and you are a false prophet. **Deut. 18:22** tells us about false prophets. See also **Deut. 13:1-5**.

\*\* They refuse to publicly rebuke false prophets such as Shawn Bolz and others because they believe it would bring harm to the prophetic movement. Some of their prophecies are downright sickening (one prophecy regarded a man a woman was to marry and she ended up being abused and almost killed).

 **5) They deny the Deity of Christ while He was on earth.** They say that He left His Deity in heaven, that He performed miracles solely as a man with God’s help so we could learn to do the same. This is outright heresy. **Jn. 9:3** alone blows this view out of the water. Plus, Jesus Himself said that He was God **(Jn. 5; Jn. 8:58; Jn. 10:29-30)**. The following quotes are taken from books and messages of Bill Johnson of Bethel Church.

* Jesus “performed miracles, wonders and signs, as a man in right “relationship to” God, not as God. If He performed miracles because He was God, then they would be unattainable for us. But if he did them as a man, I am responsible to pursue His lifestyle”. When Heaven Invades Earth.
* “Jesus was ***so emptied of divine capacity***, eternally God but He chose to live with the restrictions as a man. Why? To set a model, to set something to follow, an example. His lifestyle, if He did all of His miracles as God, I’m still impressed but I’m not compelled to follow. (me – Really?) I just stand back and go, ‘Wow, that’s amazing. God, do some more. That’s awesome, do some more, God!’ “But when I find out that He set aside divinity and ***chose to display what life would be like for anyone who had no sin***, and was completely empowered by the Spirit of God, He models something that is made available because the blood of Jesus was shed to deal with the sin issue. There is no lack in the power or the effectiveness of the blood of Jesus. There is nothing He left outside of its reach. There’s nothing if He had it to do over again He would include that He didn’t already include. It’s all covered. “When He said, ‘It is finished,’ He meant it. He meant it is a complete job, and it is more than sufficient for absolute transformation. So, what does He do? He models for us the normal Christian life.”

 **6) Signs and Wonders are to be the norm** – Without supernatural things happening, God’s kingdom will not be fulfilled. Here are some things to note when it comes to this being expected for God to work in the world. Note some of the following statements from Bill Johnson from his book, “When Heaven Invades Earth,”

*“it is impossible to give an adequate witness of God without demonstrating his supernatural power” and “When miracles are absent, so is the glory of God.”*

\*\* Johnson also claims that any Gospel presentation without “signs and wonders” is a different Gospel. Compare that statement to **Eph. 2:8-20; Rom. 10:9-13; 1 Cor. 15:1-4.**

**Response:** God’s glory is not dependent upon us. Glory is connected to His Character, and we are to do things for His glory, but nowhere what Johnson claims is found in Scripture. According to **1 Cor. 10:31**, all we do is for the glory of God.

 **7) The Gospel** – They do not believe that salvation from sin is enough or is the complete Gospel. The Gospel is not incomplete without healings (spiritual, physical), being delivered from issues, preserved, protected, prosperous, whole, saved.

**Response:** The Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and us putting our faith in the Person of Jesus and what He did, to save us **(1 Cor. 15; Eph. 2:8-10)**.

 **8) Additional strange teachings, beliefs, and statements of some within NAR**

 **1) There are “dead raising” teams** – There is no objective evidence that any of these supposed teams have actually raised someone from the dead though they claim to have done so. Anyone can make the claim, but the evidence is key.

\*\* Bethel church teaches kids to raise the dead by wrapping each other in toilet paper like mummies so that you can practice.

 **2) Grave soaking (sucking)** – There is the thought that by touching the gravesite of a believer who has passed who God used, you can have their anointing passed on to you. Bethel claims that they never endorsed this yet students from their Bethel School of Supernatural Ministries were doing it and they had to get the idea somewhere.

\*\* Note how Kris Vallotton tries to explain away what happened and notice the contradiction,

*“I've been asked what I think about "grave sucking" several times lately. Personally, I had never heard the phrase before a couple of months ago. I guess they are asking if I believe you can receive some dead person's "anointing" by laying on their grave.*

*I think the idea came from the story in the book of 2 Kings. It reads, "Elisha died, and they buried him. Now the bands of the Moabites would invade the land in the spring of the year. As they were burying a man, behold, they saw a marauding band; and they cast the man into the grave of Elisha. And when the man touched the bones of Elisha he revived and stood up on his feet." 2 Kings 13:20-21*

*…It has been an inside joke among our Bethel team for years. I really thought it was funny until some folks took it seriously. I mean if God wanted us to receive some kind of impartation from people who have already passed than certainly we would have some New Testament examples or instruction on it…*

\*\* Bill Johnson, in the book, “Physics of Heaven”, wrote, not connected to grave soaking but to this idea of anointings from past saints that can be used today,

*“There are anointings, mantles, revelations and mysteries that have lain unclaimed, literally where they were left, because the generation that walked in them never passed them on. I believe it’s possible for us to recover realms of anointing, realms of insight, realms of God that have been untended for decades simply by choosing to reclaim them and perpetuate them for future generations.”*

 **3) The promotion of bizarre beliefs.** Note the following from Doug Geivett and Holly Pivec’s book “Counterfeit Kingdom,”

*“Another Bethel-endorsed book promotes practices that have historically been associated with the occult. Moving in Glory Realms, by Joshua Mills, includes a foreword written by Bill Johnson. This book teaches that Christians can have “encounters” with dead Christians, and it promotes “spirit travel”—when a person’s body remains in one physical location, but their spirit travels to heaven or to other nations on earth, and can even travel to events in the past or future. Johnson enthusiastically writes, “It is a book I highly recommend.”*

 **4) The Passion Bible.** Brian Simmons supposedly was told by Jesus Christ, in his room in 2009, after breathing upon Brian, to give us a new Bible. (We will dive more into this in the fall seminar)

\*\* Simmons claims that by Jesus breathing on him, he received the spirit of revelation and that God would give him the secrets of the Hebrew language. Keep in mind that every Bible translation that is reputable is done by a group of scholars. Simmons alone did the Passion Bible.

\*\* Simmons claims an angel named “Passion” accompanies him in his ministry and empowers him in his work. This is heretical.

\*\* This Bible is a paraphrase, and promotes NAR teachings. There are plenty of solid Biblical critiques about this horrible Bible on the Internet that you can read.

  **5) Jenn Johnson on the Holy Spirit,** *“The Holy Spirit to me is like the genie from Aladdin, and he’s blue, and he’s funny – and he’s sneaky […]”*

**\*\* Word of Faith Movement (WOF)**

**Opening Remarks:**

**1) This movement’s roots are found in the teachings of E.W. Kenyon and Phineas Quimby.** The idea is that you can create your own reality, make God do what you want. You can be, and are to be, healthy and wealthy. For WOF teachers this means also having the faith to do so.

**2) They teach Wealth transfer.** We as believers are going to become extraordinarily wealthy to help the kingdom of God.

**3) They do not live by what they teach.** Kenneth Copeland has hearing aids, a pacemaker. Bill Johnson wears glasses. Gloria Copeland is suffering from either Alzheimer’s or dementia. Their claims that healing comes and is God’s will and if you are not healed it is because of unbelief or lack of faith, in fact, shaming you if you do not believe, then it is on you.

**4) Key figures of this movement** include Kenneth Copeland, Joseph Prince, Joyce Meyer, Benny Hinn, Creflo Dollar, T.D. Jakes, the late Jerry Savelle, Brandon Barr, Kat Kerr, Joel Osteen, Mike Todd.

**2) Key Beliefs** – We will see that in some areas they overlap with NAR. These are not necessarily in order of importance.

  **1) Your faith can create reality, including health and wealth.** Before the fall of man into sin, humans had the ability to call things into existence, through words, and by having enough faith. Because of Jesus, we now can do as God did. In addition, you have the ability to control things, such as the weather.

\*\* This is a tweet from Creflo Dollar, *“As spiritual beings who possess the nature of God, we have the ability to speak things into existence just like God did.”*

\*\* Regarding the weather, this was from Gloria Copeland years back, and they still believe it, *“You know, you’re supposed to control the weather.”*

 **2) Word-Faith teachers claim that God operates by spiritual laws and is obliged to obey the faith-filled commands and desires of believers.** He not only reveals prosperity teaching supernaturally to the Word-Faith teachers, but personally and verbally confirms their unique interpretations of Scripture (Copeland, Laws of Prosperity, pp. 60-62). – Pastor Jim Smith, former WOF follower

 **3) Jesus died spiritually and was re-born in hell.** There is no place in Scripture where this is taught. Jesus said in **Jn. 19:30** at the cross, “It is finished.” See also **Col. 1:19-22**. Joyce Meyer teaches this. Kenneth Copeland teaches this, the idea that Christ was the first “born again” person. And by the way, Jesus did not go to hell. That is not what **Eph. 4:9-10** or **1 Peter 3:18-22** teach. But the WOF teachers go to heretical extremes on this.

\*\* Joyce Meyer wrote, *“His spirit went to hell because that is where we deserve to go… There is no hope of anyone going to heaven unless they believe this truth.”* (*The most important decision you’ll ever make*, by Joyce Meyer, second printing, May 1993, page 37)

 **4) Like NAR, it is God’s will that everyone be healed.** This is because they believe physical healing was promised in the atonement in **1 Peter 2:24**. But as we see in **Mt. 8:17**, the word for “healing” can refer to spiritual healing, not just physical healing, as seen in passages such as **Mt. 13:15; Jn. 12:40**.

 **5) They believe in the “little gods” theory.** Jesus died on the cross, was reborn in hell and rose from the dead with God’s nature, thus imparting to us the divine nature.

Read the following from Kenneth Copeland, *“God’s reason for creating Adam was His desire to reproduce Himself. I mean a reproduction of Himself, and in the Garden of Eden, He did just that. He was not a little like God. He was not almost like God. He was not subordinate to God even… Adam is as much like God as you could get, just the same as Jesus… Adam, in the Garden of Eden, was God manifested in the flesh.” (Kenneth Copeland, “Following the Faith of Abraham),” side 1*

\*\* From Creflo Dollar,

*Dollar: “If horses get together, they produce what?”*

*Congregation: “Horses!”*

*Dollar: If dogs get together, they produce what?”*

*Congregation: “Dogs!”*

*Dollar: “If cats get together, they produce what?”*

*Congregation: “Cats!”*

*Dollar: “So if the Godhead says ‘Let us make man in our image,’ and everything produces after its own kind, then they produce what?”*

*Congregation: “gods!”*

*Dollar: “gods. Little “g” gods. You’re not human. Only human part of you is this flesh you’re wearing.”*

\*\* Copeland says, *"God is...a being that stands somewhere around 6'-2," 6'-3," that weighs somewhere in the neighborhood of a couple of hundred pounds, little better, and has a hand span of nine inches across"* (Spirit, Soul, and Body, 1985, Tape #01-0601).

**Point:** Their view of God is unbiblical, takes away from His Sovereignty, and makes man the controller of God. You can command God to do certain things because of the relationship we have with Him. **Jn. 4:24** tells us God is a Spirit.

**6) Additional statements and doctrines (more on this in the fall seminar)**

 **1) Copeland says he will live to be 120 years old.**

 **2) They believe you can, and NAR does also, be drunk in the Spirit**, laughing uncontrollably, or staggering around. Nowhere in Scripture is that found.

  **3) Joyce Meyer claims that she does not sin anymore.** This directly contradicts **1 Jn. 1:8** and places such as **Gal. 5:16-23**. It is true that if controlled by the Spirit we do not sin but no one is controlled 24-7, not even Joyce Meyer.