



Sentinel

Joyce Meyer: What should we make of her teachings?



(This article was written some time ago by Paul Belli and was downloaded off the internet. Ed)

The purpose of this review is not to deal with oddball or wacko Word/Faith teachings. It is to confront heresy head on, wherever it's found. And it is found in abundance in Joyce Meyer's book. Apart from the heresy, the book is also very aberrant and problematic. Our focus will be on the heretical material. If her book finds a place in your personal library, it should be in the cult section, not the evangelism section.

Debunking Common Objections

First off, let me preface the following by debunking a few common responses from Charismatics (I am referring, of course, to Word/Faith Charismatics) when they're challenged and confronted about heresy within their camp.

- 1) I do not question Joyce's motives. This is not a subjective issue but an objective one.
- 2) I never argue or divide over peripheral doctrines. I only argue and divide over essential doctrines. Charismatics do not understand the difference between essentials and peripherals and that is exactly why they become defensive when someone criticizes the doctrines of demons that they hold dear.

And it's also why they themselves are very divisive when it comes to the gifts of the Holy Spirit and other non-essential issues.

Charismatics, when asked, would be hard pressed to explain the difference between essentials and peripherals or even list a few of the essentials. Essential doctrines are essential for salvation. Non-essentials are not essential for salvation.

For example, if someone says that the Trinity is a pagan doctrine from Satan (as did William Branham), they cannot be considered a believer. But if someone has the "wrong" view of the Rapture, they would not for that reason be considered a non-Christian. Salvation hinges upon the essentials just as life on this planet hinges upon having food, air, and water. Our physical lives do not hinge upon clothes, cars, and buildings. We can live without them. They are not essential to life and are thus non-essentials.

Not in all my years as a Charismatic did I ever hear *any* Charismatic teacher, pastor, or evangelist explain the above or make a clear distinction between the two different types of doctrine. Rather, time and time again they would "knock down all doctrinal walls" and make great claims of super spirituality over "dead churches" and "theologians" who differ with them on the subject of the Gifts.

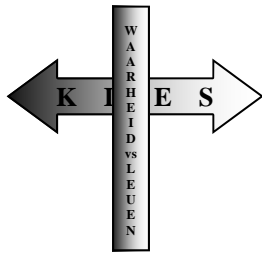
Heresy, by the way, is when an essential is distorted beyond recognition or replaced with a counterfeit. Aberrant is when a peripheral doctrine is distorted or replaced with something else. A wrong view of the Rapture is merely aberrant. It only becomes heresy when salvation hinges upon a "correct" interpretation of it.

3) I do not take Mrs. Meyer out of context or twist her words. My experience has been that in any attempt to defend such teachers, most Charismatics put words in the mouths of their mentors rather than face up to solid, word-for-word quotations. The blade cuts both ways, I will not read into what is said nor will I allow others to interpret plain statements to mean things other than what was intended by the speaker/writer.

4) I am not an "anti-Charismatic." I was led to the Lord by watching The 700 Club, belonged to Grace World Outreach Center (now called Grace Church-St. Louis) for a couple of years, and then belonged to Life Christian Center for 8 years or so. All these ministries are local Charismatic ministries and I love these folks dearly.

5) I am not "attacking" Charismatics, I'm "responding" to *their attacks* upon the body of Christ. All cults cry, "You're attacking us." Ain't so. Those who proclaim and believe damnable doctrines

(Continued on page 6)



'n Interkerklike Evangelisasie en Uitreik-aksie/An Interdenominational Evangelization Outreach
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Redaksioneel/Editorial

THIS ISSUE

A recent concern expressed by a fellow-Christian about Joyce Meyer and her popularity among so many people moved me to place the article featured in this issue.

I am fully aware that the article may upset some of our readers or those you may pass copies of this edition on to. However, please consider seriously what is being said in this article by Paul Belli. I also have similar articles by other writers, one of which is by Hank Hanegraaff of Christian Research Institute. Hank's book **Christianity In Crisis** is a very valuable book to have on your bookshelf as a source of reference. This book deals extensively with the subtle and not so subtle teachings of the Word Faith Movement and teachers like Kenneth Copeland, TJ Jakes, the late Kenneth Hagin and many others.

If you are interested I can let you have an audio CD so that you can hear for yourself some of the things Joyce Meyer is saying, which Paul Belli quotes in this article.

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The centre-page article by Marsha West is excellent in my humble opinion and should really make any sincere Christian think about where he/she stands with regards to his/her faith in Christ Jesus.

I sincerely hope you will enjoy this edition of **Sentinel** and find it informative and uplifting.

NAWEEKKAMP

Ons naweekkamp van 23-25 Februarie het gekom en gegaan.

Weereens het ek besondere seën gedurende die naweek ervaar en van terugvoer wat ek per foon en E-pos ontvang het, blyk dit dieselfde met ander ook te gewees het.

Saam met elkeen wat daar was kan ons net ons hemelse Vader dank vir al die seën wat Hy deur sy Gees so mildelik aan ons geskenk het.

Weereens was dit wonderlik om daar te wees vir ander wat die seer van geliefdes wat deur misleiding van hulle af weg geskeur is met ons kom deel het. Dit was versterkend om vir hulle te kon bid en hulle te verseker dat ons daar is vir hulle. Ons sal julle in ons gebede onthou en glo dat Jesus Christus op sy regte tyd in hulle lewens sal ingryp.

Ons sal weer in volgende jaar, heel moontlik gedurende Mei-maand, kamp maak. Dit is dan koeler. Dankie aan elkeen wat die jaar daar was.

Hou die webwerf dop vir nuus oor DVDs wat beskikbaar sal wees oor dit wat tydens die naweek aangebied was.

(Adres: <http://www.gksa.org.za/kies>)

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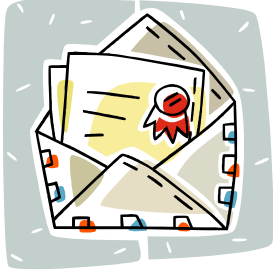
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Letters/Briewe

Wil niemand "judge" nie

Ek het U email address gekry van een van die reply's op julle website "gksa.org.za". Ek het deur julle artikel gelees van "Die Ou Apostoliese Kerk van Afrika (OAK)", en baie van die goed wat daar staan is goed wat ek al voorheen gehoor het by vriende en familieleden wat al jare gelede die Ou Apostoliese kerk besoek het (hulle was nie members nie, net besoekers). Ons het 'n Ou Apostoliese kerk in ons straat, om die waarheid te sê dis net skuins oorkant ons huis, en ek moet sê ek loop amper elke dag daar verby, en ek weet omtrent nog niks oor wat daar binne aangaan nie. Ek het 'n baie goeie vriend wat wel aan die Ou Apostoliese kerk behoort, en ek het hom verwys na jul website. Ek praat baie met my vriend, en ek het nog nooit 'n rede gekry om te verdink dat hulle so te sê 'n "cult" is nie, want baie van die goed waaraan die kerk waaraan ek behoort, "Lutheran", glo, is amper dieselfde soos die goed waaraan hulle glo soos ek kon aflei van wat my vriend verduidelik het.

Maar om die waarheid te sê, die goed wat my vriende en my familieleden vir my gesê het oor hul visits aan die OAK, het nooit ooreengestem met wat my vriend my vertel het nie. Soos ek gesê het, het ek jul link vir my vriend gestuur en mooi aan hom verduidelik dat ek hom as 'n persoon nie judge nie, maar as die info wat op julle website oor die OAK waar is, dan is ek STERK teen hul kerk ek hulle geloof, want dit is niks minder nie as 'n cult. Sy reply was dat die eerste stelling op jul website "Die Ou Apostoliese Kerk (OAK) is eintlik 'n afsplintering van die Nuwe Apostelkerk wat" alreeds verkeerd is, want die OAK is voor die NAK gestig. Ek het toe navorsing gedoen maar ek het elke keer gevind dat die NAK is voor

die OAK gestig. Ek het hom toe gevra om deur jul website te lees en vir my te wys wat reg en verkeerd is. Hy het my gewys dat feitlik alles op julle website oor die OAK is feitlik verkeerd, en dat dit vir hom meer klink soos die NAK. Ek vind dit baie snaaks, want hy het selfs vir my gesê dat hul kerk wel deur Mr. Klibbe gestig was. Een van my vriend se comments was ook dat baie van die goed op jul website is wel waar, maar dat julle dit so gedraai het dat dit uit 'n heel verkeerde konteks geplaas is.

My vraag aan U is:

Ek wil niemand judge nie, nie vir julle nie, nie my vriend nie, maar iemand is besig om klomp bollie hier te praat. My vriend se kerk is wel die OAK, maar hy het my vertel dat dit die NAK is wat photos van hul Apostels in hul huise aanhou. IS JULLE INFO DALK NIE BESIG OM TE VERWYS NA DIE NAK NIE, of is my vriend besig om my in draaitjies te stuur. Ek voel nie ek het rede om hom te doubt nie, want ek ken hom al jare en hy is nie iemand wat sommer so sal lieg nie. IS DIT DALK MOONTLIK DAT DAAR VANDAG DRIE APOSTOLIESE KERKE IS, DIE NAK, DIE OAK EN DAN MY VRIEND HULLE SE "VERSION" VAN DIE OAK? Voor ek afsluit laat ek net sê van die goed wat ek gehoor het by my vriende en familie ooreenstem met van julle info, soos bv. dat die amp bo jou, jou deur na die hemel kan oopsluit ens.

Ek sien uit om van julle te hoor,
Groete,
Denver

Jou navorsing dat die OAK na die NAK gestig is, is heeltemal reg. Die OAK het agv van 'n hooggeragshofsaak in 1926 ontstaan. Die NAK was eerste op die toneel. Dit het in óf 1820 óf 1830 (bronne is onseker oor die datum) in Skotland ontstaan. Die Nuwe Apostoliese Kerk is as maatskappy op 19 Desember 1910 ingevolge Artikel 21 van Wet 31 van 1909 (Tvl) geregistreer.

Skryf aan: Die Redakteur, *Sentinel*, Posbus 8009, EDLEEN, 1625.
Write to: The Editor, *Sentinel*, P O Box 8009, EDLEEN, 1625
E-pos: kies_ciecc@telkomsa.net

Carl George Klibbe is in 1908 as eerste Apostel vir Afrika van die NAK aangestel. Hy word in Julie 1913 deur die Hoofapostel afgedank en GHW Schlaphoff word in dieselfde maand as Apostel vir Afrika in Klibbe se plek aangestel. Klibbe weier om afstand te doen en dit lei uiteindelik tot genoemde hofsaak. Die dagvaarding was op 15 September 1926 op Klibbe bedien.

Die twee aandeelhouders, CH Kreunen (wat die dagvaarding laat uitreik het en CG Klibbe (sewe aandeel was oorspronklik met stigting uitgereik) bereik 'n ooreenkoms buite die hof.

Die besluite behels onder andere:

Klibbe doen afstand van die amp en al die gemeentes onder hom.

Schlaphoff word Apostel in sy plek van die NAK.

Die kerk onder Klibbe gaan voort maar onder die nuwe naam, Ou Apostoliese Kerk van Afrika.

Kreunen onderneem om lid van die NAK te bly en sy aandeel aan Klibbe en die OAK oor te dra.

Die ooreenkoms word 'n hofbevel gemaak op 21 Desember 1926 en eenkeer in die koerant wat in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Kaapstad, Kimberley, Durban, Bloemfontein, Oos-Londen, Port Elizabeth en Pietermaritzburg gesikuleer het, gepubliseer.

Die partye, Kreunen en Klibbe, dra elkeen hulle eie kostes.

Hierdie is dus waarlik 'n geval van die "Nuwe" wat die eintlik die "Oue" is.

Dit is geskiedenis en is opgeteken wat met bietjie moeite tot die beskikking van elkeen is. Enige Ou Apostolie wat andersins beweer ken nie sy eie kerk se geskiedenis nie.

Wat jou vriend se ander opmerkings aangaande verkeerde feite in die inligting op ons webwerf betref sal ons dit opreg waardeur indien hy dit asseblief net met "jota en titel" uitwys en ons stel dit reg met die nodige apologie. Hierdie vraag was al in die verlede aan verskeie apostolies gerig, maar tot dusver het niemand nog met konkrete of enige bewyse voor die dag gekom nie.

Ons vertrou van harte dat jou vrae beantwoord is.

Red

SOMETHING WORTH DYING FOR

Marsha West

**Battling The
Culture of
Destruction**



By Marsha West
September 22, 2006
NewsWithViews.com
(Published with the kind permission of the author)

It is painfully clear that a large number of professed Christians are seriously lacking on what constitutes authentic Christianity. They've slipped their moorings and are adrift without a rudder. You know things are bad when a Christian is unable to explain why he or she believes in Jesus Christ. They simply cannot move beyond, "Jesus died for my sins" in a discussion. Some people even try the excuse, "My religious beliefs are personal." They're hoping that if they toss out the "personal" defense, it will get them off the hook, as most people won't pry into private matters. Inside they're quaking like a bowl of Jell-o, praying that their questioner won't press them to give a rational reason for believing that Jesus is the Son of God.

I have actually heard professed Christians say, "I was raised Baptist (or Methodist or Catholic?) and went to church every Sunday when I was a kid" as if that qualifies them as a Christian. Going to church on Sunday doesn't cut it, folks. The Bible says, "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15).

Christians are put on this earth to share their faith with unbelievers. Dodging questions regarding your faith does not get you high marks with God. On the contrary, Jesus said, "Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. 9 But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God." (Luke 12:8,9). Harsh words. Scary thought.

Which brings to mind an Old Testament story. Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were around sixteen years old when Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and carried the Jews into captivity. Forthwith their names were changed to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, respectively. ([Veggie Tales](#) calls them Rack, Shack and Benny.) These young men were "good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans" (Daniel 1:4). They were also religious. What mattered to them above all else is what the Bible said. It was the ultimate authority in their lives. Because they had God's word in their hearts, they were faithful to Him. One day the king decided to have an image of gold made and summoned the governors from the surrounding area to come to the dedication of the image. The king commanded that all of his subjects fall down and worship the gold statue.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were pressured to worship the image but they refused. They chose to remain faithful to God regardless of what the consequences might be. The king threatened to have them thrown into a blazing furnace. Still, they would not relent. It tookchutzpah to defy a king. But that's what they did. True to his word, the king had the three of them thrown into the blazing furnace. God to the rescue! He sent a heavenly visitor into the furnace with them. Not a hair on their heads was singed. (Those boys had fire insurance!)

The king became an instant convert. He said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!" (Daniel 3:28).

The other day I was listening to a radio talk show (conservative) and the host asked the listening audience, "What would you do if you were forced to convert to Islam at the point of a gun?" One caller, claiming to be a Christian, said "If it were me, I'd probably convert." Another caller insisted that she would never convert, even with a gun to her head or a knife pressed against her throat. The host was quick to point out that while the Apostle Peter stood warming his hands by an open fire he was asked if he knew Jesus and he denied knowing him three times. Peter was one of Jesus's followers, he saw His miracles, and still he was afraid to admit that he knew Jesus! In the host's way of thinking it's understandable, even acceptable, for a terrified Christian to deny Christ.

But what about all the Christian martyrs we read about in the history books, the ones who were marched into a den of hungry lions to be eaten alive, or covered in pitch and used as human torches to light the streets of Rome? Certainly they were terrified by the prospect of the pain they'd have to suffer for refusing to renounce their belief in Christ. The Apostle Paul had his head separated from his body with a sword. (The guillotine wasn't invented until the French Revolution.) Think he wasn't a tad nervous?

Legend has it that Peter was crucified with his head downward because he declared himself unworthy to die in the same manner as the Lord. Joan of Ark was burnt at the stake. Her response was to repeatedly call out the name of Jesus while the flames lapped at her feet!

In the old days, Christians chose death over renouncing their faith in Christ. Yet modern Christians should do whatever it takes to skirt death? And this would include "temporarily" converting to another religion!

Not all Christians are worried about the here and now; they're more concerned with pleasing God. As I write this piece, Christians around the globe are being tortured, mutilated and murdered for refusing to renounce their faith. They are the real martyrs.

Christian martyrs are different from Japanese kamikaze pilots that flew planes into ships or Islamic jihadists who fly planes into buildings. They all chose when and how they will die. Today's Christian martyrs are not given that option. Their lives are snuffed out by Christ-haters, not for any crime they've committed, only because they bear the Name of Jesus Christ. Case in point: In 2005 on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi 3 teenage girls, all Christians, "were savagely attacked with machetes as they walked across a cocoa plantation on their way to the private Christian school they attended. Their heads were found some distance from the bodies, the head of one girl discarded mockingly in front of a Christian church." [1]

Contrast Christian martyrdom with Muslim martyrdom. Islam rewards those who are willing to die for their god, "Allah." The Islamofacists believe that those who murder the infidels, burn their cities, hijack airplanes to fly them into buildings, butcher innocent women and children, and generally terrorize people, will spend their eternity in Paradise. They expect to be rewarded for their violence with 72 virgins who await them at the gate and offer them a bottle of French wine. (Evidently there are vineyards in Paradise.) Men and women are

willing to strap bombs to their bodies and blow themselves to kingdom come so that they will receive their rewards in heaven, sooner than later. Many jihadists are conditioned from childhood to become killing machines.

In Palestinian textbooks there's an officially sanctioned message for 11 and 12-year-old kids: "The noble soul has two goals: death and the desire for it." [2] Muslim Children are being prepared for jihad practically from birth! Albeit their reasoning is warped, these people go willingly to their deaths, taking innocents with them to the grave. They do it because of what they believe in, i.e. suicide and murder are normal and martyrdom is the highest achievement a Muslim can aspire to. Martyrs do not anticipate "Allah" meeting them when they enter heaven; they expect a host of young women who will service them to their hearts content.

Christians, on the other hand, are murdered because of the person they believe in. When a Christian is martyred and enters into the kingdom of heaven, he or she will be in the presence of their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He's the only Reward they look forward to. Christ is the only reward Christians want or need, or ever will need. Throughout history, millions of martyrs have confessed Jesus before men, and lost their lives over it.

Sadly, many Christians today are taking their faith for granted. In churches across America voices ring out, "He's my Rock, my fortress and my deliverer. My God, my strength, in whom I will trust." Those words express confidence. Those same words convey that we trust in Christ alone as the object of our faith. He's our rock, our deliverer, our strength. Given that the Church is adrift in an ocean of biblical ignorance, one can't help but wonder if those who are singing praises in church sanctuaries truly mean the words that go up to God's ears.

Those who take their faith seriously need to ask themselves some hard questions: Do you have

a Savior worth defending? More importantly, is your Deliverer worth dying for?

If your answer to these questions are yes, then the next time someone asks you to enlighten him about Christianity, don't give him the "My religion is personal," excuse. Give him an earful or Truth.

Footnotes:

1. [The real secret to defeating radical Islam](#) by David Kuplian
2. [Children as Bombs](#) by Ralph R. Reiland

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Marsha West is the Founder and Editor of the E-Mail Brigade News Report, an online news report for conservative people of faith. Marsha is a freelance writer specializing in Christian worldview. She is a regular contributor to NewsWithViews.com, Alainsnewsletter.com, CapitolHillCoffeeHouse.com, plus her commentaries appear in MichNews.com and bibleteacher.org.

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(Continued from page 1)

of demons had better get used to good Christian folks responding to their attacks upon our faith. It's not only a good defense of the faith, it's biblical! In fact, one of my favorite pastors, Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, is a Charismatic and he is very vocal in his opposition to the heresies within the Word/Faith Charismatic movement.

6) The most popular charge is that this type of criticism is "unloving and divisive." 1 Corinthians 13:6,7 says that love rejoices with the truth and "always protects." It is very loving to protect someone from a damnable lie that masquerades as the truth. And about division, are we to unite with cultists or remain separate from them?

7) "Judge not lest you be judged!" Matthew 7: 1. In verse 15 Jesus warns us to "watch out for false prophets." How can we evaluate whether or not someone is a false prophet unless we use some degree of judgment? Jesus was speaking about judging self righteously and hypocritically. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 5:3, "And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this.." (New International Version) And in verse 12 he states, "Are you not to judge those inside [the church]?" Judging in a biblical manner is the result of discernment.

8) "It's wrong to name names." I don't know where Christians ever got such an unbiblical idea except from those who wish to guard their prey. Did not Paul name names? Names like Hymenaeus, Philetus, Demas, and Alexander. And did not David mention Doeg the Edomite? What do people have to hide by not wanting their names named? If someone was molesting young children in your neighborhood and I knew their name, would you be content to only know that they were out there or would you want to know their name?

Consider the Tylenol scare years ago. Would you have been satisfied if the media had said, "Watch out! There's a popular pain reliever on the market that's been tampered with which could kill you. We don't want to upset the company that produces it lest we offend them. Therefore, we won't name them. Lots of luck!" I don't think so. Such would be a "warningless-warning." Good for nothing and only protecting the guilty.

9) "Did you go to Joyce Meyer personally as laid out in Matthew 18 before writing this review?" Do not make the mistake that the cults make by reading into (eisegesis) a passage something that is not there. Instead, read out of (exegesis) the passage what is there.

Read verses 15 - 17 and you'll find that we are to approach those who have personally sinned against us. Joyce has done me no personal wrong. So in accordance with Matthew 18, I did not go to her personally.

Even if I were to attempt to approach her with the heresy she presents in her book, do you think she would hear me out? Not a chance in Purgatory. Those close to her were given the cold shoulder when attempting such a thing. Who then am I? I am not a supporter. I am not a well known pastor of a big church. I am a nobody. To try would only be an exercise in futility.

Did she bother to consult me before publicly proclaiming a doctrine that is dangerous to my lost loved ones and "neighbors" within my local community? No. Should she have? No, the public arena is open to all who would use it. Therefore, I am not doing Joyce any personal wrong, either. If she so chooses to poison people's minds with heresy, I, and others like me, are just as free to inoculate people's minds to such poison.

"Is this biblical?" Anyone who knows their Bible would not ask such a question. The Apostle Paul dealt with Peter over a non-personal issue that involved sound doctrine. And he did so publicly.

"When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of *the gospel*, I said to Peter *in front of them all*, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?" Galatians 2:14

Had Peter personally sinned against Paul? No. Did Paul have a reason to be concerned? Yes. Did Paul go privately to Peter and only later take two others with him before "telling it to the church?" No. Why? Matthew 18 does not apply to such instances. What we have in Galatians chapter two is a precedence for publicly handling doctrinal issues and disputes. Scripture is replete with such examples.

Notice, too, that Paul was not nit-picking. Peter was starting to undermine the Gospel with rules and regulations thus producing "another gospel" and Paul was rightfully concerned. As you read on, you'll see that I am not criticizing Joyce over benign doctrines. What she espouses in her book is a cancer that has spread within the body of Christ.

I realize that some folks find it hard to stomach confrontation, but we are commanded to "defend the faith, contend for the faith, and fight the good fight of the faith." Consider the Apos-

tle Paul's attitude in responding to heretics.

"And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ." 2 Corinthians II: 12-13

Paul was relentless in his defense of the truth. He would, no doubt, be considered a "heresy hunter" by today's Word/Faith Charismatic pastors and evangelists. They, like Paul's enemies, want to be considered peers with Evangelical pastors and evangelists. The fact that many Evangelicals do consider them their peers is regrettable. For, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?" 2 Corinthians 6:14-15

If Word/Faith Charismatics want to be considered believers, let them prove it by renouncing the heresy that is so prevalent within their camp. Because of my involvement with the Charismatic movement, I know what I'm talking about. I was repeatedly exposed to heresy as a Charismatic. And because of my intense involvement in cult research and evangelism for about 9 years, I don't feel that I can be criticized as one unfamiliar with sound doctrine.

"What Should You Believe?"

"*What Should You Believe?*" is the title to chapter 4 (page 35) and the chapter I will focus on. Since the book's title implies that its purpose is to help someone to make "the most important decision (they) will ever make," we can assume that this chapter will discuss the facts whereby they may make an intelligent decision.

Joyce writes, "During that time He entered hell, where you and I deserved to go (legally) because of our sin. He paid the price there. ...no plan was too extreme. ... Jesus paid on the cross and in hell." (Underlining in the original) On page 36, she continues..... God rose up from His throne and said to demon powers tormenting the sinless Son of God, 'Let Him go.' Then the resurrection power of Almighty God went through hell and **filled** Jesus. ...He was resurrected from the dead - the first born-again man. (Underlining in the original.)

The first subchapter heading is, "WHAT HAPPENED ON THE CROSS?" (Caps and underlining in the original) The

heading is similar to Kenneth Copeland's infamous tape, "*What Happened From The Cross To The Throne*" (1984) in which he goes into great detail about the subject. Copeland apparently borrowed the title from E. W. Kenyon's book by the same name as well as the same heretical theme. Joyce no doubt has been greatly influenced by both these men. Both works are Charismatic "classics."

In this subchapter she writes, "His spirit went to hell because that is where we deserved to go. Remember in the very beginning of this, I said, 'When you die, only your body dies. The rest of you, your soul and spirit, goes either to heaven or hell.'"

"There is no choice 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." (Underlining added.)

On page 38 she claims, "Jesus went to hell for you." (Underlining in the original)

What she's just covered is the classical (and damnable) Word/Faith "Born-Again Jesus Gospel." It's been espoused by the likes of Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Fred Price, John Jacobs, Charles Capps, Benny Hinn, Jan Crouch, and David Crank just to name a few. It's usually presented under the guise of "revelation knowledge" given by the Holy Ghost and based upon Scripture. Odd how none of these folks give credit to the originators of this heresy but rather credit (in reality, blame) such blasphemy on the Holy Spirit.

Does this message have "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes it" as Joyce implies. If so, it is the Gospel (Romans 1: 16). And if not, it is a "different gospel." (Galatians 1:6-9) Let's see for ourselves as good Bereans (Acts 17:11).

Let's start with the idea of Jesus in Hell. Charismatics, not understanding the Born-Again Jesus Gospel or its implications, try to make their case by saying, "Well of course Jesus went to Hell. Doesn't it say so somewhere in the book of Acts?"

While it is true that Jesus went to Hell, the real area of attention needs to be narrowed down to this: Did He go there to pay for our sins? Payment is the issue, not visitation. What kind of payment? According to Joyce and others, it's the same kind of payment that took place on the cross! Perhaps even better.

"He paid the price there."

"Jesus paid on the cross and in hell." (Underlining in the original)

"...Jesus took your place in hell."

"Jesus went to hell for you." (Underlining in the original)

Enemies Of The Cross

Can anything be clearer? Does it sound as if she is "glorying in the cross" (Galatians 6:14)? Rather, she and the others share the one common denominator of every cult in the whole world; they disparage the cross. Thus they are "enemies of the cross of Christ (Philippians 3:18).

Remember this definition. An enemy of the cross is one who implies that the work of Jesus Christ on the cross was insufficient for our salvation. Period! Their destiny? Destruction! (Philippians 3:19) Thus, no enemy of the cross can be my brother in Christ.

Look into it. *Every* cult disparages the cross. And the cross being the core, the very crux of the Gospel makes any message that disparages the cross "another gospel."

Think about it, Jehovah's Witnesses view the work of Christ as simply a down payment for their salvation. It was not sufficient in and of itself. It must be supplemented with a regular serving of field service, literature placement, baptism, obedience to dress and hair codes, meeting attendance, and a myriad of good works on the "salvation treadmill."

On top of that they claim that the cross is a pagan symbol. Likewise, Mormons don't display crosses. Why? They believe that part of the atonement was accomplished in the Garden of Gethsemane where "He sweat as it were great drops of blood." That's why a Mormon who commits murder must have his own blood shed (i.e., firing squad) in order to atone for that particular sin (the dreaded Blood, Atonement doctrine).

Reverend Sun Myung Moon teaches that Jesus failed His mission on earth by allowing Himself to be crucified.

"If Jesus had not been crucified, what would have happened? He would have accomplished the providence of salvation both spiritually and physically."

Oneness Pentecostals teach that it's **essential** for one to be baptized in order to be saved. The finished work of Christ was not enough. The Church of Christ teaches this also. Both groups also add many works that salvation hinges upon. Is it any wonder they have no assurance of salvation.

Roman Catholicism teaches Purgatory. Harmless? It's a place of fiery torment equal to the flames of Hell where one is purged (i.e., cleansed) of his sins, according to official Roman Catholic doctrine. In fact, the Council of Trent anathematizes (curses) anyone who believes that the cross is sufficient. Does His blood or **fire** cleanse us? Enough said. What is more important, the cross is relegated to Plan A while Purgatory is Plan B for those to whom the cross is insufficient.

Let me define a couple of words I've been using to help make my point. Disparage means to belittle, diminish, lessen, reduce, devalue, discount, impair, lower, degrade, minimize, curtail, or decrease.

To better illustrate this, let's say that a man says, "I love my wife with all my heart. (Then whispering) But listen, don't tell anybody, I've got a girlfriend on the side." Does he really love his wife with all his heart? How can he? It's double talk. He has just disparaged her. Her value to him is less than I — 00%!

The word insufficient means not enough, not ample, unsatisfactory, or inadequate. The adulterous man's wife is not sufficient to meet his needs.

"It Is Unfinished??"

Did Jesus say, "It is unfinished!?" The Greek word for "it is finished" means "paid in FULL." What do the cults claim? It was not paid in full. It was merely a down payment.

But does the Word/Faith movement teach about the cross?

"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 before He went to the throne ... Jesus's death on the cross was only the beginning of the complete work of redemption." -- Kenneth Copeland (underlining added.)

Compare that with this, "...when Jesus uttered his last words on the cross, saying, 'It is finished' (John 19:30), he did not mean that the whole purpose of the providence of salvation was attained through the cross. ...Therefore, Jesus meant by the words 'it is finished' that he finished establishing the basis for the providence of spiritual salvation through the cross, which was the secondary providence of salvation." Sun Myung Moon in his work, "*Divine Principle*" pages 151 and 152.

Do you smell a rat? Copeland also stated, "Satan *conquered* Jesus on the cross..." *Holy Bible: Kenneth Copeland Reference Edition* page 129 (italics in the original). Who should we believe, Jesus or Kenneth? Does he glory in the

cross or disparage it? He not only *implies* that it is insufficient, he's blatant, bold, and arrogant about it.

Some are apt to argue that Copeland does glory in the cross. While it is true that he has tapes and books on the cross and the blood of Christ and talks a good talk, it is also true that he disparages the cross. He is no better than the adulterous husband who speaks "highly" of his wife. In the book of Galatians, Paul portrays men, like Copeland, who accept "another gospel" as "confused, led astray, and bewitched."

Likewise, Joyce is just as confused. On page 38, she writes, "...that sinless blood had been shed to pay for man's sins." She cannot both glory in the blood and disparage it at the same time. Either it paid for our sins or it was merely a down payment. Because it can't be both, which is it? If you read the works of the major cults you'll find at times that they too speak "highly" of the cross and the blood of Christ.

If we can let Copeland and his ilk off the hook, we must also do the same for every cult that disparages the cross. For, "Differing weights and differing measures -- the LORD detests them both." (Proverbs 20: 1 0 NIV) Either all enemies of the cross are destined to destruction or they are our brothers in Christ. We can't be choosy based on who gives us the best "Holy Ghost goose bumps."

Does Joyce have a problem with the Born-Again Jesus Gospel? Apparently not. She endorses the rantings of one of the worst enemies of the cross in the world and makes it the main theme of her book, which, by the way, she offers at her meetings to lost souls who are looking for the truth.

Hot-line Or Hot Air?

Worse yet, Charismatics claim to have a "hot-line" to heaven. They receive Words, tongues, prophecies, interpretations, dreams, and visions from "God" yet why hasn't He bothered to warn them that they're following false brothers, wolves in sheep's clothing, enemies of the cross?

Can you imagine a parent watching their son eat rat poisoning and instead of warning him of the danger he's in, patting him on the head and saying, "I love you son. Keep loving me. I'll always be with you. I will never leave you or forsake you"? Not on your life! That parent's first words would be of warning, not praise. To my knowledge, nowhere at any time has God ever given one of these "great men or women of God" a public word of rebuke for teaching heresy. Why not? Because they have turned their backs on God by re-

jecting His finished work upon the cross. (See 2 Thess 2:11 & 1 Cor 1:18-31))

I believe this fact alone voids their claim of having the true gifts of the Spirit. I do not discount the existence of the gifts today, I distinguish the difference between the real and the counterfeit. Those with the "gifts" ought to be the most discerning. The facts prove just the opposite.

Many Charismatic leaders (Paul Crouch for one) endorse Oneness Pentecostals as our brothers in Christ yet Oneness Pentecostals deny *and* attack (not question or doubt) the doctrine of the Trinity which classifies them as a cult. Just because Oneness Pentecostals seem to "speak in tongues" and have the "gifts of the Spirit" doesn't necessarily make it so. God does not bless cults with His precious gifts. And Charismatics would know better if they truly had a hot-line to heaven.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons) claims to have the gifts of the Spirit. Yet just a few years ago the leadership of the church purchased forgeries of what they thought were documents written by Joseph Smith, Jr., the founder of their religion. They paid over one million dollars directly to the forger because the documents were potentially damaging to the church.

Their intent was to lock them up in a vault in Salt Lake City, Utah as they have had a habit of doing for decades. I ask those of you who are Charismatic, does this not void their claim to having the gifts? If this is so, what makes them any different from Charismatic leaders who, having the "gifts," do not realize they are following bonafide enemies of the cross? Perhaps the line is dead.

Charismatics are very divisive over their "gifts." They will tell you implicitly and explicitly that they are the super Christians because they have the gifts. So this is not a test that's to be put off easily. Their "gifts" either work or they don't. The bottom line: They fail the test with flying colors.

Lost And Found Deity

Paul not only warned the Corinthian church of accepting "another gospel," he warned them of accepting "another Jesus." (2 Corinthians 11:4) On page 38, Joyce writes, "For three days He was alone paying for our sins as only a man." (underlining in the original)

Here again she regurgitates the teachings of Kenyon and Copeland. It's all part of the myth of Jesus losing His Deity on the cross, going to Hell

as a *mere man*, being reborn in Hell, receiving back His Deity and thus becoming God once again. Since we are reborn, we too (they reason) become "little Gods" (which she does not go into in her book).

You would think that Hebrews 13:8, which Charismatics are so fond of quoting, would prevent this sort of heresy since it says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Charismatics frequently quote it but do not read out of it what is there (exegesis) but rather read into it what is not there (eisegesis).

Instead of reading that He is immutable (unchangeable,) they read it to mean that "Jesus Christ *does* the same (things) yesterday and today and forever." Whenever they quote this verse, it's usually in reference to healing and miracles. This is just another example of "anointed" Scripture twisting.

And no, Jesus does not do the same things today that He did in the past. Let Charismatics provide just *one* person who having been born blind can now see with 20/20 vision.

It is heresy to say that at some point in time, God ceased being Triune in nature. When the nature of Jesus is changed, "another Jesus" is produced. Keep in mind that the Gospel is a Who and a what: Who is Jesus and what did He do. The theology of the Word/Faith movement, as clearly spelled out in Joyce's book, has both "another Jesus" and "another gospel." (2 Cor 11:1-4) Lest Charismatics think this a minor point, let me point out that the majority of all cults have "another Jesus." Not good company to be in.

Counterfeit Scripture & Bible Butchering

Next, as if enough hasn't been covered, is attributing things to God that He never said. Can Joyce or any other Charismatic give me "chapter and verse" where God said "Let Him go"? Or as others have said, "It is enough!" Is this not mythology? Are their ears itching so much that anything goes?

Charismatic creation of Scripture is nothing new. Who hasn't heard the "verse," "No one can come to the Father except the Spirit draws him"? When confronted with this "verse," pastors Jeff Perry (St. Louis Family Church) and Rick Shelton (Joyce's pastor-Life Christian Center) both reference it as John 6:44.

The *New International Version* quotes Jesus as saying, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day."-John 6:44. Where do you see the word "Spirit"? And who is drawing

us to whom? Sloppy? For a new believer, yes. For a minister of the Gospel, unthinkable! Teachers will be judged more strictly for their handling (and mis-handling) of God's Word. (James 3:1)

Firstborn = Reborn = Born-Again???

Remember, a non-Christian is reading this book and thinking that Joyce Meyer knows her Bible better than he does so what she said He said must be so. This is not commendable. There are no heavenly brownie points for putting words (and doctrines) in God's mouth.

Did the Jesus you and I serve and worship become **"the first born-again man"**? I believe it was Kenneth Copeland who played biblical sleight-of-hand in a paragraph of one of his books where he mentioned "firstborn" then "reborn" then "born again" in reference to Jesus' visit to Hell. Jesus being the firstborn has absolutely nothing to do with being born again. It has to do with His preeminence. Anyone who has studied to show himself approved unto God, properly handling the word of truth would not make such a grievous error.

Satan seems to enjoy twisting the meaning of the word "firstborn." He's taught Jehovah's Witnesses that it means that Jesus is the "first and greatest creation of Jehovah God." Ask any JW how he knows that Jesus was only a mere man and they'll always bring up the fact that He is called the firstborn. Smell a rat yet?

When I first became aware of this aspect of the Born-Again Jesus Gospel, red flags went up immediately. My Jesus was not born-again. God does not need to be born-again.

Joyce, if she had "studied to show herself approved unto God, a workman who does not need to blush with embarrassment, properly handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15 Walter Martin paraphrase), would never believe or teach such damnable heresy. The very fact that one would follow enemies of the cross is proof that they have not studied to show themselves approved unto God.

What is needed is not a defensive attitude but rather repentance. Neither Joyce nor local Word/Faith pastors Rick Shelton, Ron Tucker (Grace Church-St. Louis), or Jeff Perry have repented of either teaching or allowing to be taught to their flocks such heresies and for allowing them to follow enemies of the cross. They have not renounced those who continue to teach them, nor have they denounced such damnable doctrines. How then can they win this city (St. Louis, MO) for Christ, protect their flocks, equip the saints, or contend for the faith? They haven't, they aren't, and they can't. Period!

Extracting Some, But Not All, Of The Cancer or How Not To Edit Heresy

I was notified by a mutual acquaintance that Joyce was corrected by a pastor about this book before he would allow her to speak at his church and as a result, made some changes in her book. I soon purchased the "Second Printing - May, 1993" edition and found that it was definitely revised but found that no mention is made of the fact. (Up to this point, I have been quoting from the "First Printing - August, 1991" edition.) The only chapter that appears to have been changed is chapter four. Some of the Born-Again Jesus Gospel was altered or deleted but the bulk of it remained.

Assuming Mrs. Meyer believes that error has been deleted and that the book is now clean, this prompts me to ask: Why hasn't she warned anyone to trash the old book? Why hasn't she recalled the original edition? Why hasn't she made a note in the new edition of her errors in the previous edition? Why has she opted to let the changes go by quietly unnoticed? Has she explained to her pastor what she's done so that he may publicly repent of allowing her to fall into and teach such error in her previous printing of the book?

Or were the changes simply insignificant? Not really worth mentioning? In reality, the changes were very significant. She deleted the following **bold faced** words from the second printing,

"As God's Spirit left Him." (page 37)

"...this truth **I am presenting.**" (page 37)

"Jesus took your place **in hell.**" (page 37)

"...the Father **filled His spirit again.** For three days He was alone **paying for our sins as "only a man."** **The price had to be paid by someone just like us.**" (page 38, underlining in the original)

"He went to hell to **pay the debt you owed.**" (page 41)

These deleted portions are indeed significant. They represent a mix of doctrines peculiar to the Word/Faith movement's Born Again Jesus Gospel. (An odd deletion is the "I am presenting." Whether she explicitly states that she is presenting it or not, she is still "presenting" it. And it doesn't become more "truth" by this deletion.) But perhaps they are merely minor issues in Joyce's mind. By her editorial actions, she seems to be saying, "Yes, having Jesus' atonement in Hell is error but nothing to lose any sleep

over. In fact, it's so trivial that I only edited part of it out of my book." If that's her thinking, I must ask, is "another gospel" which sends the lost to Hell a doctrine to be treated as a secondary doctrine along with the rapture, baptism, eschatology, tithing, or the gifts?

I don't know why she made any changes at all because the book is still poisoned with heresy. If she had a grip on the Gospel (as the title of the book declares), she would have publicly repented of **all** the error published in the first printing, renounced the Born-Again Jesus Gospel, and denounced those who still teach it.

Some would argue that it's no big deal. Let's check to see what the word of God has to say.

"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, **let him be eternally condemned!** As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, **let him be eternally condemned!**" Galatians 1:6-9

Benny Hinn changed his mind about the Born-Again Jesus Gospel (but treated it as if it were merely a non-essential issue-no repentance was thus necessary.) Perhaps Joyce should at least take a tip from Benny.

Ask former Jehovah's Witnesses if they left the Watchtower or former Mormons if they left The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints because these organizations hold a wrong view on some peripheral doctrine or because they proclaim a counterfeit-gospel. They leave as fast as possible because the gospel that's presented is counterfeit and therefore deadly.

Summary??

"Summary" is the subchapter heading on page 40. It covers eleven points (though unnumbered) which would be considered the Gospel if it weren't for the seventh point. It reads, "He went to hell in your place and gained victory there, triumphing over the enemy. (Acts 2:31)" Since she notes Acts 2:31, let's see what she's referring to. The *King James Version* reads,

"He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in *hell*, neither his flesh did see corruption."

The *King James Version* reads, "Foreseeing, he spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in *Hades*, nor did His flesh see corruption."

Hades, the realm of departed spirits, consisted of at least two compartments: one for the wicked and the other for the righteous. We see this clearly illustrated by Jesus Himself in the story (not parable) of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). The area for the righteous was also called Paradise before Jesus moved its occupants to the third Heaven (Ephesians 4:8-10 and 2 Corinthians 12:2,4).

Jesus told the thief on the cross, "I tell you the truth, **today** you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). How do we reconcile passages like these? In interpreting a Scripture like Acts 2:3 1, we use a rule of interpretation called the Full Counsel of God, or Scripture Interprets Scripture. With it we look at *all* the passages that deal with a given subject to determine what is being said and taught. It's nothing more than looking at the overall context of the entire Bible.

We also use a rule that says that vague, unclear, and problematic passages are interpreted by the clear passages, not the other way around. These basic rules of interpretation are part of what's called hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the science of biblical interpretation. As a Charismatic, I was *never* taught anything about hermeneutics. Properly handling the word of truth is foreign to the Word/Faith movement. And it shows.

Having said that, did He pay for our sins and redeem us in Hell or upon the cross? It's really very simple. The question is answered by the superabundance of Scriptures that points us to the cross. Most notably, Paul gloried in the cross, not hell.

Adding just one work to the finished work of the cross disparages the cross thus creating "another gospel." Although the Born-Again Jesus Gospel does not require any additional work on the part of the repentant sinner for his salvation (as the cults teach), the result is the same. Any work, whether Jesus' torment in Hell or our works implies that the work of Christ upon the cross is insufficient. Only enemies of the cross disparage the cross. Not true Christians. Except for her statement, "He went to hell to pay the debt you owed," her summary could be called the Gospel. What a shame.

"You Put Up With It Easily Enough"

That's what Paul said to the Corinthians for receiving a "different gospel, Jesus, and Spirit" (2 Corinthians 11:4). Why then should we put up with someone

who proclaims a counterfeit-gospel just because they are within the flock? Is spiritual cyanide less deadly when it's within the camp of God than when it's on the outside? Should we sit idly by wringing our hands? Or worse yet, continue to fellowship with those trapped within the kingdom of the cults without so much as giving a word of warning?

To those of you who are in the Word/Faith movement, ask yourself what "gospel" you accepted in order to be saved? Was it the Born Again Jesus Gospel? (i.e., the death, burial, **torment in hell, born-again in hell**, and bodily resurrection of Christ for our sins.) Or was it the death, burial, and bodily resurrection of Christ for our sins? (1 Corinthians 15:1-4) Which one do you proclaim? Which one will you defend?

Is it true that, "There is no hope of anyone going to heaven unless they believe this truth. You cannot go to heaven unless you believe with all your heart that Jesus took your place"? (still referring to hell and not the cross - page 37, Second Printing - May, 1993)

The Apostle Paul thinks not. And most of all, God thinks not. Joyce Meyer has stood the Gospel on its head. She has perverted it beyond recognition. And beyond its ability to save.

"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." Isaiah 5:20

And woe to those who put "another gospel" for the Gospel! Mrs. Meyer would not have made such a grievous statement if she had not gotten her theology from a brood of vipers, enemies of the cross of Christ.

Finding Christ is certainly "*The Most Important Decision You Will Ever Make*" but is the information provided in Joyce Meyer's book helpful or damnable? Can an intelligent decision be made based upon it? I think not. Just as a counterfeit life preserver is useless no matter how strongly and sincerely one clings to it, a counterfeit gospel is useless no matter how much faith or sincerity is attached to it. Nor is Joyce Meyer's book "A complete and thorough understanding of what it means to be born again." It is anything but!

If Charismatics and others who are sympathetic to the Word/Faith movement are mad as a result of this review, they should be mad at those who promote heresy—not those who expose it. As the Apostle Paul has well said,

Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16)

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Joyce Meyer: America's leading female evangelist

"Arguably Joyce Meyer is the country's leading female evangelist," [wrote](#) The Detroit News in Sept. 2003:

Unlike some ministers who can draw only one type of audience, Meyer's messages cross all boundaries and attract people from all denominations, genders, races and income levels.

To illustrate her prominence in the ministry, more than 2.5 billion people can tune in to her television broadcasts on 400 stations around the world. Her messages are heard on more than 300 radio stations across the country. And booksellers say Meyer is the top-selling female Christian author in America... (Source: [Her ministry reaches millions](#) By Kimberly Hayes Taylor, The Detroit News, Sep. 12, 2003)

Meyer's hometown newspaper, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, wrote, **Her star has risen so high** and so fast that it amazes even Meyer. "Dave and I feel almost like, 'Can this really be us?'" she said. "We feel like we're the most blessed and honored people on the face of the Earth." Meyer's ministry stretches around the globe. From a 15-minute St. Louis-area radio show in 1983, it has spread to virtually every corner of the civilized world, largely through the reach of satellite and cable transmissions and the Internet. She says the ministry gets 15,000 letters a month from India alone.

In September, an Arabic language translation of her program began airing six times a day on the Life Channel network in the Middle East. Meyer hopes to use the network to bring the message of Christianity to 31 Islamic nations.

Meyer and her husband say the ministry has the potential to reach 2.5 billion people every weekday. The couple's recent slogan, printed on posters in the ministry's headquarters and on banners at its conferences, sets out an ambitious goal for the future: "Every nation, every city, every day." (Source: [Summary: From Fenton to fame](#) By Carolyn Tuft and Bill Smith, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Nov. 13, 2003) In much of her teaching, Meyer focuses on issues of emotion well-being and personal development. However, another explanation for Joyce Meyer's popularity lies in the fact that she promotes the [aberrant](#) and/or [heretical](#) doctrines of [Word-Faith theology](#) — with a particular emphasis on its most popular doctrines: ['positive confession'](#) and ['prosperity teaching.'](#)
