

HOUSE CHURCHES
NOTEBOOK
By: Pr. Thomas

By: Dr. Thomas Wade Akins

INTRODUCTION

There are over 6 billion people in the world today. Most are lost without Christ. Many who claim to be Christians are not really born again. The true evangelical rate in every nation is small even though there may be many “Christians”.

There is a big difference between being in the Christian religion and having a personal relationship with Christ.

Churches face a strong challenge. The goal should be “a church within walking distance of every person”.

How can this be achieved? Is it possible to plant a church within walking distance of every person on earth?

It all depends on your view of what a church is. If your view of church requires that a church have property, building, a paid ordained Pastor, then the answer is “no”. There is not enough money in the Christian world to buy all the land needed to reach the world in this manner. There is not enough money to build all the building necessary and to educate all the Pastors.

In addition, how would it be possible to have church under these conditions to people in rural areas who live far apart from each other. What about people who lived in the mountains with distances between each other. What about people who live in the deserts of the world. What about people who live in nations where it is against the law to be a Christian.

This series are lessons on the House Church Strategy. I would like to say that this is NOT “the” way to do church. It is “A” way. It is a very

good way. It is Biblical. There are advantages and these will be discussed.

We will look at the following:

- 1. A Biblical Vision**
- 2. Traditions**
- 3. What Is a Biblical Church?**
- 4. Three Characteristics of a New Testament Church**
- 5. A Biblical Basis for House Churches**
- 6. A Brief History of the Church**
- 7. Four Steps in Starting Churches**
- 8. Biblical Leadership Principles**
- 9. Advantages of House Church**
- 10. Worship Services**
- 11. The Structure of the House Church Network**
- 12. The Major Threat to House Churches—Heresy**

Developing a Vision for Your Church

By: Dr. Steve Marcum

What is Vision?

Webster's Definition-VISION- the power of SEEING; a mental image; something seen in a dream or trance

Marcum's Definition-VISION- It is a unique visual picture which the Holy Spirit births within you, that encompasses GOD'S PURPOSES for your LIFE and MINISTRY

Barna-Vision for ministry is a CLEAR MENTAL IMAGE of a preferable future imparted by God to His chosen servants and is based upon an ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING of God, SELF and CIRCUMSTANCES

Vision- The ability to see things that are not.

Research of Growing Churches

The #1 fact for growth- It is the personal vision of a pastor or church planter and his or her ability to COMMUNICATE that drives churches to growth.

The #1 desired characteristic in a leader is:

1- VISION.

2- HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

3- ABILITY

2 Main Components of Vision

1. FAITH

2. PERSISTANCE (DETERMINATION)

Why is Vision Important?

Proverbs 29:18: “Where there is no VISION the people perish.”

Vision breeds DEPENDENCE on God

Lack of vision breeds INDEPENDENCE, which leads to death (Jim Dethmer)

6 Reasons Why Vision is Important

1. VISION GIVES US DIRECTION. A clear vision causes us to see EVERYTHING in light of it. It's the target that beckons.

2. VISION GIVES US A PASSION. Everyone needs a cause, a PURPOSE. (Renewed interest, commitment) “Am I here to do something or here for something to do?”

3. VISION ATTRACTS PEOPLE. People are looking for a CHALLENGE, excitement, risk.

4. VISION HELPS FACILITATE CHANGE. An outgrowth of vision is CHANGE. Every living entity is constantly undergoing CHANGE. Vision provides a framework for change to occur.

5. VISION ESTABLISHES PRIORITIES. First things must be first-causes us to PRIORITIZE ministry goals.

6. VISION INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY. When people grasp God's vision for THEMSELVES or for the organization they are part of, there is a heightened level of PRODUCTIVITY. Vision causes us to develop better STRATEGIES and to be more focused.

Challenges Associated with God's Vision

1. Vision demands PERSEVERANCE.
2. Vision demands HARD WORK.
3. Vision demands CHANGE.
4. Vision demands FAITH
5. Vision is given to an INDIVIDUAL.
6. Vision often times OUTLIVES the VISIONARY.
7. Vision MOTIVATES people.
8. Vision DRIVES us to God.

How to Preserve the Vision

1. Stay in touch with GOD.
2. Learn to deal with DISCOURAGEMENT and DISAPPOINTMENT.
3. Remain ENTHUSIASTIC about the vision. Guard your passion.
4. Don't allow FEAR, FATIGUE or FRUSTRATION to steal from the vision.

5. Stay **ACCOUNTABLE**, make sure vision is being implemented.
6. **SHARE** testimonies about how the vision is being lived out.
7. **EVALUATE** your vision (ownership, impact)
- 8.

Biblical Examples of Vision

Abraham- Gen. 12:1-3- God called to claim a new land for a new people who would become the spiritual kinfolk of God Almighty.

Moses-Exodus 3:1-10- God chose him to lead His people out of bondage into the Promised Land.

Joshua-Joshua 1:1-4- God gave Moses the vision but Joshua inherited the vision and completed it.

Nehemiah-Nehemiah 2:1-5- God gave Nehemiah the vision of restoring the walls of Jerusalem thereby creating spiritual renewal among the Jews.

Paul- Romans 15:7-21- God called Paul to reach the Gentiles and to form new churches.

THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR HOUSE CHURCHES

As you look at the Book of Acts you will notice the following development:

PROMISE OF POWER—Luke 24:44-53

PENTECOST—Acts 2:1-4,

PURPOSES 2:41-47 (The start of the church---5 PURPOSES.

PERSECUTION-There were daily conversions...so persecution began.

7:44-53—Steven stoned. Look what he preached in these verses!

8:1-Saul the persecutor.

NOTE: the following about the locations of churches:

Acts 16:40

Acts 17:5-6

Acts 18:7

Acts 19:9

19:23-27... There could have been up to 50,000 converts. Imagine the reaction from the Jewish leaders as people were leaving the synagogues to become followers of Christ.

The church was forced to meet in homes. Christianity was illegal under the Roman government. Rome ruled the world.

The church met in homes and this set the pattern for the next 300 years.

Acts 20:20

CHURCH HISTORY AFTER THE NEW TESTAMENT

(The teachings in the section come from a book titled: The Biblical Church by Teryl Hebert)

The church changed with the rise of the Emperor, Constantine.

In 306 A.D. Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantine became the Emperor of Rome. By 324 A.D. he became the head of the Roman Empire. He changed the church of Jesus Christ.

Edit of Tolerance

Constantine's mother became a Christian. Thus, this presented a great problem for him because he would either have to kill his own mother OR change the law.

Christianity ---The Official Religion

Thus, in 313 A.D. one of the most important events since the resurrection of Christ took place. Constantine made Christianity the

legal. This caused him to later make Christianity the official religion of the state.

Legalizing Christianity did what persecution of the church had not been able to accomplish since Pentecost....make Christianity a part of the world. Now, those who were worshipping pagans were being persecuted instead of the Christians.

Pagans had to attend “indoctrination” classes and be baptized. It later became punishment by death for refusing to be baptized.

Congregations

Constantine began to rebuild the pagan temples he had destroyed. Then he gave them to the Christians as worship centers.

Under this change only trained ministers would be allowed to speak and untrained people could only sit and listen. Lay people were not allowed to speak.

The word “congregation” was an Old Testament term used for the nation of Israel and only used once in the New Testament.

Eventually, it became illegal to meet in homes for worship. Worship was only permitted in state approved “congregations” and with state approved ministers.

Constantine began to pay his clergy full time salaries. This created a big distinction between the clergy and the layman. This distinction and division did not exist in the New Testament.

The Nicaean Council

Constantine over rode the authority of his bishops by presiding over them to form a doctrinal creed. Note: there is no evidence he was ever a real Christian. He was baptized on his death bed. There was no need for a life change because all one needed to do was recite a creed.

The Hybrid Church

After Constantine the State and the church were married. Within a few short years the church no longer met in homes but in temples that were formerly pagan. Worship services were led by professional ministers.

The New Theology

Aurelius Augustine was born in 354 A.D. He was born about 17 years after Constantine. He became the Bishop of Hippo in northern Africa under the Roman Empire. He had great speaking skills and became very influential.

A Look at Augustine's doctrines

Mary was born without sin and lived her whole life was lived without sin.

A baby who had not been baptized was condemned to hell.

Sex, within marriage is an immoral act.

War can be holy.

There is no forgiveness of sin outside the Roman Catholic Church.

Some of the teachings of the original 12 Apostles no longer apply because they lived in a different age.

There is a purgatory purging fire after death.

The dead can benefit from Communion.

It is proper for the Christian State to persecute heretics.

The fall of Adam caused all men to be totally depraved which became known as the "original sin". This means that the guilt of Adam's sin was passed on to all of us. In other words, we are born guilty of sin because of what Adam did. This leads to infant baptism.

The reality is that we are all born with the "sin nature". Romans 5:12-14 says that death is passed on to all men as a result of sin.

He taught that man does not have a free will to choose to believe.

He believed that man is predestined to be saved or lost. Those predestined to hell could not possibly be saved.

The Doctrine of the Two Swords

After Constantine married the State to the Church they began to work together for their own interest. The Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the world were married to each other.

Augustine then created a new damaging doctrine call the Doctrine of the Two Swords.

Read Luke 22:34-38 regarding the Passover meal of Jesus and the disciples.

Augustine interpreted this passage to mean that the church has one sword of authority and the state has another sword. Thus, the spiritual authority of the church and the literal sword of the Roman army would work together to evangelize the world.

He combined this teaching with Luke 14:15-24.

In Verse 23 Jesus said, “Compel” them to come in. Augustine combined the doctrine of the two swords and this phrase to evangelism. The priests would march in front of the army into a city, town or village and preach the gospel. Then they commanded the entire city, town or village to be baptized or be killed. Those who resisted were killed.

The church that at one time was persecuted was now doing the persecuting.

The years following are called the “dark years”. Heresies began to be on the rise. The church was weakened.

Conclusion:

The point of this section is to understand that the church changed under Constantine. Originally, each church was basically small groups. They met in homes and multiplied throughout the world. Constantine changed the structure.

Augustine changed the theology with led to many heresies as we will see in another section as we study the major heresy facing our modern church today.

Every House Church leader needs to be aware of both the Biblical house church structure and the importance of believing and teaching Biblical doctrines. Maintaining both of these will be vital to the growth of the church and the Kingdom of God.

TRADITIONS

One of the most crucial issues our Lord Jesus Christ faced was the issue of traditions.

For example: Mark 3: 1-8 tells the story of when Jesus went to the synagogue and healed a man on the Sabbath day. This was a very powerful moment. Just think about what Jesus did. He gave the man an opportunity to use his hand which had been withered since birth.

How did the crowd react? The religious leaders reacted with anger and want to kill Jesus. (Verse 8).

The question is: why would they want to kill Jesus after healing a man?

The answer: It was the Sabbath day!

Question: What was the problem with that? Jesus is GOD who created the Sabbath day. He would never commit a sin. The Bible teaches that Jesus “knew NO sin”. He was sinless.

So, what was the problem? The problem was that he did NOT break any laws of GOD.

However, religious men created rules that God did not make. This became a serious issue because Jesus did NOT break the laws of God but he broke the rules of man.

When he did this then they responded by saying, “we will kill you”. (Verse 8).

In other words, Jesus broke the TRADITIONS of man not the laws of God!

The word “traditions” is “paradosis” in the Greek language and it means “to transmit”. We can “transmit” a disease, for example. One can “transmit” radio waves. (Hebert).

A tradition is a custom or belief that is transmitted from one generation to another.

Note what the Word of God says about unbiblical traditions.

Matthew 15:1-20.

Galatians 1:10-14—Paul describes his traditions before he came to Christ.

Colossians 2:8

I Peter 1:13-19—Peter speaks of the traditions regarding salvation.

The Bible does talk about good traditions.

II Thessalonians 2:13-17.

ADVANTAGES OF HOUSE CHURCHES

(Some of the ideas below are from a book “Houses that Changed the World” by Wolfgang Simpson)

Evangelism and Discipleship Focus

Discipleship should be done in a community setting. It is the function of the church to disciple all believers. House church are small group settings. Everyone knows everyone else.

Jesus had 12 disciples. He trained them for three years. To disciple believers there must be relationships over a period of time. There must be Biblical teaching. There must be times of prayer together. There must be evangelism together. All of these things are possible in a small house church.

Instead of getting people to church. The church goes to the people.

House churches are an excellent way to reach Muslims for Christ. Many would never go inside a church building. However, when relationships are formed they may be more likely to go to a home meeting.

Multiplication

The focus on House Churches needs to be on reproduction and multiplication. The House Church has great potential to grow because of the cell concept. Cells multiply. House churches can grow up to 15- 20 believers and then multiply. They are not meant to become huge churches.

Someone has compared it to elephants and rabbits. A female elephant can produce after 10 to 15 years. After her first calf then around every five years. That is slow reproduction.

A rabbit on the other hand can reproduce after 30 days. She reproduces 4 to 12 babies. After that she can reproduce daily.

So, traditional churches are sometimes compared to elephants and house churches to rabbits. So, one can decide if he wants to be an “Elephant Church” or a “Rabbit Church”.

People Involvement

The average church has up to 20% of the members who are really involved. They do 80% of the work. However, in the house church every person can be well disciple and trained to participate in ministry and not just the “professional” clergy and a select few members.

The people are involved in ministry. Baptisms and the Lord's Supper are conducted by the lay leaders of the house church and not by a Pastor who lives far away and comes there to do the baptisms for them. When this occurs then people are baptized by a Pastor who did not win them to the Lord, did not teach them the Bible, and who do not know them.

Pastoral Care

One of the major issues in church life is Pastoral care. Caring for people when they get sick, hungry or family members die. Normally, the Senior Pastor is the one whom everyone expects to be there meeting their spiritual needs. In the House Church there is a lay leader or leaders. Members take care of members. There may be 100 to 200 house churches in the network. There is no possible way that the Leader of the House Church Network can meet the spiritual needs of all the members.

Accountability

It is difficult for the traditional church to truly be effective in changing the basic values and life styles of people. Many people just go through a routine. They go to church, sing, listen to a preacher preach a sermon, go back home and there is no real life change. Why? Because there is no accountability. Accountability is possible in small groups. People learn from the teachings of the Bible. They return to the house the following week and can discuss how they applied what they learned.

Leadership is composed of lay members.

Elders were appointed by the Apostle Paul in the book of Acts. These were lay leaders. They do not have to be graduate of seminaries or Bible Schools. They do need to be Godly and mature in the faith. They also need to meet the Biblical requirements in the New Testament

Support during persecution

Christian persecution is becoming more and more a reality in our modern world.

Biblical Insights”

Jesus was persecuted. John 5:16, “So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath Day, the Jews PERSECUTED him”.

Jesus predicted persecution for his disciples.

Pray for the persecutors. Matt. 5:14, “But, I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”.

Luke 21:12 says, “...they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name”.

John 15:20 says, “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also”.

In Matt. 5:10-12 he said, “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”.

Small house churches can provide strong support for anyone who is being persecuted. He or she is not lost in the crowd of a large church. They will be surrounded by believers who know them and love them and help them during the time of persecution.

Less Expensive

House churches do not require a building. Thus, they are less expensive to operate. Lay people are the leaders so there are no paid Pastors. Offerings can be taken and used to meet the needs of people who live in the local area, materials for Bible Studies, transportation to start new works in nearby villages, towns or cities.

WORSHIP SERVICES

The worship services are critical in every church. People often make decisions whether or not they want to be a member or participate in a church based on the experience in the worship services.

In the house church the worship becomes the point of worship, fellowship, prayer, sharing, teaching, learning, partaking the Lords Supper, and baptisms. Observe three things:

1. The Size and Time of the Worship Services

One of the things that must be considered in having worship services in houses is the time of the service.

I once asked a House Church leader how many people he had coming. He said, “60”. I asked him, “How do you do that when the house is so small”. He responded by saying, “We meet on three separate days of the week. One group meets on Wednesday, another on Saturday and one on Sunday”.

By using this approach a leader could have a 100 or more members.

2. Money and Offerings

The fastest way to destroy a church is through a lack of integrity. If a leader steals the offerings of the church for himself the church will die, the leader will live with shame in the community, his family will be hurt if not destroyed. So, it is critical the money is handled properly.

There is a “business” side of ministry. God expects us to handle His business in an honest way. There are many “religious thieves” in the world that use God and church to make money. They will lie, cheat, steal, deceive, preach false doctrines...there is NO limit to what some people will do to get money.

For example: If we had a Water Filter Factory to provide clean water for the poor and I raised money from Christians for that ministry and then kept it for myself that would be stealing.

It is the same with the church. An offering is taken publicly from members and even guests. What happens to the money? Does it belong to the Pastor or the Church? The answer is: the church.

Therefore, an accounting of the money should be given to the church on how much was received and exactly how the money was spent. If a leader cannot do that then I would highly suspect him to be a thief. There are many “thief Pastors” and “thief leaders” in the world.

So, one House Church Network Leader does the following: He only takes up offerings to meet real or emergency needs of people in the church or community. The church discusses if they want to help or not. If the church decides to help meet the need they take up an offering and 100% of the money goes to that cause.

I would openly and quickly say to any leader or potential House Church leader that if they are a leader to make money then this is not the place for you. All monies will be openly accounted for.

3. The Order of Service

I suggest the following:

- 1. Worship with Songs of Praise**
- 2. Prayer time: Allow each person an opportunity to share his burdens and ask for prayer. Let this be a time of sharing.**
- 3. Testimony Time: allow anyone to share any blessings of the week.**
- 4. Teaching Time: This is important because Biblical truths and doctrines must be taught.**

Here are some suggestions:

- A. One can begin with using the Good News and Beginning A New Life in Christ Study Books so every one learns the life of Christ.**
- B. Biographical Study: You take a Person in the Bible and study his or her entire life.**
- C. Book studies: go through every verse in each Chapter. I suggest you start with the Book of Ephesians.**
- D. Topical Study: Teach on a topic like: Family Life, the Doctrine of God**

E. Application: In every method the leader must make sure everyone has an opportunity to share their thoughts as you study the Bible together. Ask the question, “how does this verse apply to you?”

This is NOT a “preach a sermon” time. Sermon preaching is not a good thing to do. Make it biblical, simple, practical, and personal. Have participation.

5. Practice the Lord’s Supper and baptism. You can have the Lord’s Supper every week, once a month, once a quarter or whenever. It is up to the church

Foundational Principles of Leadership

The key to developing any ministry is “leadership” especially in House Churches. If you do not have strong, mature trusted leaders many bad things will happen. Immorality and false teachings can easily come into the church. False leaders will try to steal members, steal offering money etc. So, it is critical that the good strong leaders are developed. Let us examine a few facts about good leadership by

Mr. Bill Lawrence.

OVERVIEW:

The heart of a leader demands a love that will get involved in the struggles and messes that their followers face in life, a love that will confront out of a security drawn from knowing God and His purposes in our lives.

To accomplish the purpose of forming leaders, the leader former must:

LEADERS MUST UNDERSTAND WHAT LEADERSHIP IS.

Leadership is the act of influencing/serving others out of Christ's interests in their lives so they accomplish God's purposes for and through them.

Influence comes from serving by

modeling

instructing

exhorting

evaluating

confronting

training

releasing

Influence does not come by

overpowering

belittling

manipulating

threatening

avoiding

competing

controlling

Serving is *slave leadership*—a radical commitment to Christ in every follower's life that impels the leader to act in love with truth no matter what it costs that leader ([Mt. 20:26-27](#); [John 13:16](#); [Phil. 2:5-11](#); [II Cor. 4:5](#)).

The leader focuses on God's purposes *for* and *through* the followers.

God's purpose *for* the followers is to grow them into Christlikeness, and the leader is one of His prime instruments in guiding the followers to become more and more like Christ.

God's purpose *through* the followers is to participate with Him in accomplishing the Great Commission in accordance with their gifts and opportunities.

Leading is knowing where you want to go and getting others to go there with you.

Leading is getting a vision accomplished.

But leadership is about far more than this.

To get a vision accomplished and burn followers out is to fail as a leader.

To get a vision accomplished and build followers up is to succeed as a leader.

If you pursue leadership development (knowledge and skill development) and leader formation (character growth) in the action of accomplishing a specific vision, you will more than get that vision done.

Leaders must know how to equip their followers to exercise their gifts ([Eph. 4:11](#))—mend nets (Mk. 1:19), restore sinners ([Gal. 6:1](#)), set bones

- **develop their followers skills**
-

LEADERS MUST HAVE IN-DEPTH RELATIONSHIPS

You cannot have an in-depth relationship with everyone you lead, but everyone on your team or in your sphere of responsibility should have some kind of in-depth relationship with a leader former.

Some will be more effective than others as leader formers, but all must have someone ahead of them who seeks to know them at the heart level.

To know someone at the heart level, you must know that person's

- **fears**
- **reasons for anger**
- **dreams**

LEADERS MUST HAVE THE APPROPRIATE ABILITY TO CONFRONT

You need to determine your own willingness to confront when you must despite your adversity to it; know your primary and secondary styles. Understand confrontation biblically, not culturally or

LEADERS MUST HAVE THE COURAGE TO TAKE LOVING STANDS

The courage to take loving stands relates directly to your willingness to confront.

Taking stands doesn't always involve confrontation, but it certainly can lead to it.

LEADERS MUST WILLINGLY HUMBLE THEMSELVES

Jesus washed feet of his disciples.

Leader *must* be growing in a love for Christ that frees them from every other dependency and releases them to humble themselves and serve.

LEADERS MUST FOLLOW JESUS AND MODEL WHAT THEY WANT THEIR FOLLOWERS TO BE AND DO

He knew the only way He could demonstrate true authority was to serve. He consciously chose to model what He wanted them to become.

He deliberately commanded them to do what He did, to follow Him as a model.

If we are to have His same mind-set and follow His model, then we will be models for those emerging leaders whom we are forming. This is the way of obedience for us as leader formers.

LEADERS MUST HAVE CLARITY OF VISION

Vision focused our Lord's love and gave Him a dream for His men. He saw them doing things they could *never* do apart from His love and His mission for them.

He saw these ordinary fishermen, businessmen, and common villagers changing the world.

- **He called them because of His vision for them**
- **He taught them because of His vision for them**
- **He challenged them because of His vision for them**
- **He cleansed them because of His vision for them**
- **He confronted them because of His vision for them**
- **He modeled for them because of His vision for them**
- **He commissioned them because His bigger vision of the world included *them***

Jesus was *never* off vision; He always knew what He was doing because He always knew why He was doing it.

LEADERS MUST HAVE AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF TRUTH

Theology matters, and even more so in an emerging church. Consider the first five hundred years of the church when virtually all theological problems were considered and defined.

Leaders need to understand the truths concerning God, the trinity, the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In addition to this, they must need to understand at the heart level a core of truths concerning the ways of God in forming leaders through pilgrimage:

LEADERS MUST BE WILLING TO RISK REJECTION

Jesus clearly risked rejection by the leaders of His day, both Jewish and Roman.

Rejection comes whenever one person goes against the values, expectations, desires, or demands of others in such a way that those others feel challenged, threatened, and angry.

○

HERESIES

The Bible and Heresy

Jeremiah 14:14-16 1:10-14

Matt. 24:10-11

John 8:44

2 Thessalonians 2:-1-3

I Timothy 4:1

2 Timothy 4:3-4

Acts 20:29-30

Romans 16:17-18

2 Corinthians 2:17

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

Galatians 4:17

Colossians 2:8

I Timothy 1:3-4

I Timothy 6:3-5

2 Timothy 2:16-18

Titus 1:10-14

Jude 1:3-4

Revelation 2:2

A MODERN DAY HERESY— THE WORD OF FAITH MOVEMENT

(Some of the material in this section comes from the Bible and the book: Apostasy by Jeff Klutz)

Today, there are many T.V. preachers who are deceiving millions of people. The origins of these heresies are in America.

They preach on T.V. around the world and Pastors in Africa and other places of the world watch them and preach the heresies to their congregations.

Thus, they affect millions of people in a negative way that is destroying people's faith in God. This movement is called, "The Word of Faith Movement".

The theology behind this movement is that "words spoken with faith" release a "force" into the natural world.

Therefore, a believer can use his spoken words to claim anything he desires. The sovereignty of God is set aside.

This movement was made popular by an American Pastor, Kenneth E. Hagin.

Hagin got this heresy teaching from a man named, E.W. Kenyon who said, “what I confess, I profess”.

REVELATION KNOWLEDGE

Revelation comes in two ways:

- 1. General revelation. This is God revealing Himself through nature. One can look into the heavens and know there must be a Creator. One can know that God exists but he cannot know the laws of God, his judgment of sin or his plan of salvation.**
- 2. Special revelation. This is revelation that cannot be gotten from the natural order of things. God must directly give this revelation of Himself by speaking to man Himself. He spoke to Moses, the prophets, the apostles. He revealed Himself through Jesus Christ and the Word of God.**

The Word of God is the final revelation. Isa. 40:8 says the Word of God will last forever.

However, these “Faith teachers” teach that they receive revelation that is “extra” and “outside of scriptures”. They are basically saying, “God has spoken to me and told me things that He has not told anyone else”.

Jesus warned about this in Matthew 22:29. Paul spoke about this in Galatians 1:6-8.

They are basically teaching that God has spoken a special revelation to them truths that are outside of Scripture. This is Revelation Knowledge.

Pastor Kenneth Hagin said, “God taught me about prosperity. I never read about it in a book. I got it directly from heaven.

There are no words to explain what I am telling you. I’ve got to just trust God that He’s putting it into your spirit like He put it into mine”.

FAITH AS A FORCE

True faith has an object. The object of Christian faith is Jesus Christ.

However, the Faith Movement on T.V. believe that faith is a FORCE.

When one applies faith this “force” brings miracles. God is not the object of faith but faith is.

T.V. preacher, Kenneth Copeland has repeatedly preached, “Faith is a spiritual force....It is a substance. Faith has the ability to effect natural substance”.

Biblical faith has God as its object. The Faith Movement has “faith” as its substance. One puts his faith in his faith.

Copeland said, “The force of gravity...makes the law of gravity work...this force of faith.. makes the laws of spirit world function”.

Therefore, faith is like water or fire. It has essence in and of itself. This is NOT Biblical faith.

Faith becomes your power source...not God. The God of the Bible has no equal. He is All powerful. He is the substance by which the universe was formed... God existed when nothing existed.

They teach that once a person speaks a “word of faith” then there is no limit to what one can confess to get. One can just say words and the force of faith goes into action and he gets it simply by speaking words.

Therefore, one has the ability “to create”.

T.V. preacher Copeland said, “you have the same creative faith and ability on the inside of you that God used when he created the heavens and the earth”.

This is NOT Biblical doctrine.

T.V. preacher Marilyn Hickey preached, “Speak to your circumstances; and speak faith to them to create in them and God will create what you are speaking”.

So, what do you need? You can create it by speaking words. Do you need healing, physical strength, money, and prosperity are easy to get. It only requires you to speak positive confessions into existence.

What happens if you do not get what you speak?

You will be accused of not having faith.

.....

There are two basic schemes by these false teachers.

1. The Health Gospel
2. The Wealth Gospel

THE HEALTH GOSPEL

All Pastors and Christians believe that Jesus has the power to heal the sick. That is not the issue. The issue is this: is healing fully guaranteed in the atonement (the death of Christ) so that IF one has faith God MUST heal him?

The Word of Faith movement teaches that healing is the divine right of every believer. The obvious conclusion to this belief is that a

Christian should never get sick. If a believer gets sick then it is the believers fault because he did not have enough faith.

T.V. preacher, Benny Hinn, said, “there will be no sickness for the saint of God....God promises to heal all-every one of our diseases! That means not even a headache, sinus problems, not even a toothache—nothing! No sickness should come your way”.

They teach that there are two sources of divine healing. One

They use Isa. 53:4-6 as verses to support their claims. This passage says, “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all”.

However, Isa. 53 is speaking about the coming Messiah to die for the sin of man.

The Word of Faith preachers teach that Healing is guaranteed because Jesus not only died for sin but also to heal our diseases.

This is the issue: IF a sinner who repents and comes to Jesus he will be guaranteed forgiveness because Christ died and shed his blood to pay for our sins. Forgiveness is guaranteed.

I Peter 2:24 says, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his stripes we are healed”.

However, IF healing was also “guaranteed” then every time a believer gets sick he could pray and he also experience healing 100% of the time.

Of course, we all know this is not the case. Christians die every day of cancer, malaria, aids and many other diseases. Why do they die? Is it because they did not have enough faith? Of course not. Many Christians with deep faith die.

The truth is that some do get healed and others do not. Why? We do not know. God is sovereign! We love, worship and serve Him for WHO He is and not because of what we can get out of Him.

The Word of Faith preachers believe that Faith is a Force. Therefore, if YOU speak the right words with faith you can create your healing. Also, if your “word of faith” is negative then you will not be healed.

If you have a headache you must confess that you do not. Your faith confession is must take the headache away. If not, then you did not have enough faith.

The reality is that these T.V. preaches make millions of dollars preaching this heresy leaving millions of people without a healing and thinking that the reason is that they do not have enough faith. This destroys people’s faith.

T.V. preacher Joel Osteen said, “Start calling in divine health...You may have sickness in your body; you need to call in health. Words are like seeds, they have creative power”.

So, according to the T.V. faith preachers if one is not healed it is totally that Christian’s fault because he did not have enough faith. If one speaks words in faith for something to happen then it’s the believers fault if he does not receive what he asked for.

T.V. preacher Ken Copeland said, “What makes you think the Holy Ghost wants to live inside a body where He can’t see out through the windows and He can’t hear with ears? What makes you think the Holy Spirit wants to live inside of a physical body where the limbs and the organs and the cells do not function right?”

If this is true then the Holy Spirit would not enter into deaf or blind person. A person who has cancer could not be saved. A person who is crippled could not be saved if the Holy Spirit would live in only people who are fully healthy.

This teaching is false and a heresy that needs to be rejected by all true followers of Christ.

THE WEALTH GOSPEL

The T.V. “Word of Faith” preachers teach that every believer in Christ should expect to be wealthy and have the best of everything. If one is not wealthy then this is a sign of spiritual failure.

Note that the Bible says,

I Timothy 6:6-11.

It should be noted that the Apostle Paul nor any other Biblical writer teach that wealth is evil. However the “Word of Faith” preachers teach that God wants everyone wealthy.

T.V. preacher Fred Price said, “most employers at least have the common decency not to ask people to work for them for free...Can you not believe that God is not asking you to work for Him for free either”.

Read I Timothy 6:3-5.

They teach that if one is not wealthy then he is living in sin.

T.V. preacher Marilyn Hickey said, “What do you need? Start speaking about it. Start speaking it into being. Speak to your wallet and say, you big, thick wallet full of money”.

Speak to your checkbook. Say, “you checkbook, you. You have never been so prosperous since I owned you. You are just full of money. “

Saying these words of confession with faith will create money for you.

Preacher Kenyon said, “What I confess I possess exactly”.

Kenneth Copeland said, “What you are saying what you are getting now.

If you are living in poverty and lack and want, change what you are saying.

The powerful force of the spiritual world that creates the circumstances around us is controlled by the words of the mouth”.

This is pure heresy!

These T.V. preachers preach a doctrine called, “seed faith”. This teaching is a scheme to get money from poor people so the false teacher can get rich.

A person is asked to send money to the T.V. preacher and the Lord will reward that person with money.

It teaches the following:

“Do you have a need? God’s law is simple and clear: Plant a seed--- just like God did when He had a need.

God needed sons and daughters, so He planted His very best—His only begotten Son—God could not have given more!

You know: MILLIONS of sons and daughters. Give God a seed—your best—and watch Him meet your need, great or small”.

The law is simple: “Plant a seed and God will meet your need”.

Of course, the seed is giving money to the Preacher.

T.V. preacher, Jesse Duplantis said, “If I give \$1,000 I deserve to get back \$100,000 because I am just; that is not greed”.

T.V. preacher Joyce Myers said, “Giving does not cost, it pays”.

A good question for these T.V. preachers is: “If their doctrine is true then why do they ask people to send them “seed faith” money.

Why do they not just speak a “word of faith” and get all the money they want?

This “wealth gospel” is a scheme. It is heresy!