

Contention One: The Gospel

The first thing you will find when you go on Bethel Church's website is a statement that says this: "Welcome: We are a community of believers that are very passionate about the **things of God.** And because of this, we have a passion for people, our city, and our world. Our rich history has shaped our core values. Our culture is characterized by **worship, the presence of God, family, revival, miracles and healings, and a culture of honor.**" These are their core values. Notice anything missing? **The Gospel of Christ Crucified- the most important "core value" of the Word of God.** If you ask Bill Johnson, he will surely claim that he believes Jesus Christ is Lord. But so do Mormons- yet, they add and subtract doctrines from the gospel. We also know that not everyone who calls Jesus, "Lord" will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 7:21) In the same way the Mormons add and subtract from the Gospel of Christ and the essential doctrines of His Word, Bethel does as well, which will be explored in this document.

A. What is "Revival"?

Under Bethel's "Mission" in the Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry student handbook, "REVIVAL" is defined as "the personal, regional, and global expansion of God's kingdom, through His manifest presence."

A "REVIVALIST" is defined by Bethel as: "a believer who is **focused and passionate, willing to pay any price TO live in community, purity, and power because they are loved by God, whose manifest presence transforms lives and cultures.**"

According to Bethel, "revival" and the "expansion of God's kingdom", is contingent upon what? His manifest presence.

What is God's manifest presence? God's manifest presence is essentially the Holy Spirit manifesting His presence "experientially."- **through signs & wonders, miracles and healings, etc.**

What is the Biblical issue with this definition of what a revivalist and revival is? The Gospel of Jesus Christ is missing, which is the only thing that can start revival or expand the Kingdom of God. So, in other words, Bethel claims in their own words, that revival takes place and the Kingdom is "expanded" through signs and wonders. Bethel's entire ministry is based on the manifest presence of God. This is completely unbiblical. The manifest presence of God within itself is not unbiblical, but the claim that the key to revival breaking out and the Kingdom of God expanding, through the manifestation of signs and wonders is completely heretical and contrary to what the Scripture teaches. Why?

B. The Gospel

Romans 1:16 says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the POWER OF GOD unto SALVATION for everyone who BELIEVES, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." First, let's

explore what the gospel is according to Scripture. Then, we can explore what the gospel is to Bill Johnson and Bethel Church.

- The word "gospel" literally means "good news". The Gospel is the good news concerning Christ and the way of salvation. The key to understanding the gospel is to know why it's good news. To do that, the Scriptures first outline the bad news. In the time of Moses, we were given God's perfect and holy Law. The Law can be understood as a measuring stick, and sin is anything that "falls short" of God's perfection. The righteous requirement of God's Law is so stringent that no human being could ever possibly attain it. We are not good. None are righteous compared to God. There are not enough works we can do or laws that can be followed that can earn our salvation. All of humanity is in the same depraved and wretched condition: we have all sinned, the punishment for our sin is death and we are all by our own merit, completely and utterly deserving of hell.

Romans 3:10- 18: ¹⁰As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. ¹²All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."¹³"Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." ¹⁴"Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵"Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ruin and misery mark their ways, ¹⁷and the way of peace they do not know." ¹⁸"There is no fear of God before their eyes."

So, in order for us to be saved, sin must somehow be paid for, and this was a grievous debt that we could not pay. The gospel is this: While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8) The gospel is Christ Crucified- Jesus' death on the cross, the shedding of His blood, taking the fullness of the wrath of God upon Himself, and becoming a curse for us, so that we may be set free and made righteous. Jesus Christ was crucified, died and was buried, but on the third day, he rose again, triumphantly defeating death. The fact that Jesus conquered sin and death is GOOD NEWS, indeed. And the fact that He offers to share His victory with us, is the greatest news of all. (John 14:19)

Romans 4:25- "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification"

The elements of the gospel are clearly stated in 1 Corinthians 15:3-6

³For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.

6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

Praise God, for Christ's precious blood, His sacrifice on the cross, that we may be saved. Biblically, salvation= By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Scriptures alone, all for the glory of God alone!

C. The Gospel According to Bethel

If you visit Bethel TV, or regularly attend Bethel Church Services- you cannot expect a solid biblical sermon, rooted in the firm foundation of the gospel (Christ crucified.) In the entire time I have been a student at Bethel School of Ministry, I have never heard a sermon from any of the pastors that was rooted in the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Bethel will often use the phrase "the gospel" when they preach, but if you watch their sermons, that phrase is always accompanied by a point or message on signs and wonders, and healings and miracles. That is not the gospel.

So- what exactly is the gospel, according to Bethel? In Bill's sermon, "The Gospel is the Power of God", Bill clearly defines what he believes the gospel to be (This message is consistent in all of his sermons and books as well.)

Bill says, "The Gospel of the kingdom is the power of God for deliverance, healing, and for the forgiveness of sins- it was never meant to be separated." (In the sermon he explains that this "deliverance" and "healing" is demonic deliverance and physical healing to our bodies) He continues by saying, "The Kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but righteousness, peace and joy. (Romans 14:17) Righteousness deals with the sin issue, peace deals with the (demonic) torment issue, and joy- laughter is a good medicine, deals with the healing issue...the Kingdom of God is about the triune gospel to impact the whole person- spirit, soul, and body. It was never intended that we just got forgiven so that we could go to heaven. It was so that we could become a transformed people that can model, illustrate and demonstrate the same gospel that Jesus walked the earth and preached with."

So first, that is not the definition of the gospel. The gospel is defined by Christ crucified/Resurrection, as seen in the Scriptures. The (false) gospel referenced in this sermon, is the same "gospel" Bill preaches in every other sermon and in all of his books. In order to support the false gospel of Bethel church, Bill will distort the Scriptures to fit his messages.

- The verse that he pulled out of Romans 14 to support his version of the gospel, is a passage in which Paul is telling the Romans not to judge one another unrighteously for their own personal convictions. That is why Paul says, "the Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating or drinking."

- What is the **righteousness** mentioned in Romans 14:17 ? The righteousness imputed to us because of Christ's work on the cross.
- What is the **peace** we can have? Peace with God, because of Christ's work on the cross.
- What is the **joy** that we can have? Christ! The joy of our salvation! (Psalm 95:1), the joy that we can have as we die daily and take up our crosses!

This verse is not in reference to demonic deliverance or the physical healing of our bodies.

Also, Bill misses the primary point of our salvation: to be set free from the bondage of sin and death, to be reconciled back to God through Christ's work on the cross, to live in obedience to Christ and to bring God glory and worship.

The Gospel is NOT signs and wonders. But according to Bill Johnson's book, when Heaven Invades Earth, signs and wonders have the same power as the Gospel of Christ Crucified

1. Signs and Wonders Reveal The Nature of God (pg 134)
2. Signs and Wonders Expose Sin and Bring People To A Decision (pg 134)
3. The Supernatural is the Key To Sin Cities of the World (pg 137)

Kingdom Now Heretical Theology

Another core principle of Bill Johnson's false gospel is this: he claims that Christ died so that we can **"bring God's Kingdom to Earth" (Kingdom Now Theology) and so that we can take back our dominion over the earth."**

Two things- He distorts the Lord's prayer to say that bringing God's Kingdom to earth, is accomplished through us "knowing our identity, and walking in a supernatural lifestyle (signs and wonders)." That is not what the Lord's Prayer is saying. Gods will being done, "on earth as it is in heaven" can be found in Romans 12:

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

- God's will is us offering our lives as a living sacrifice, in complete and perfect worship to Him, in complete obedience to Him, and to be in perfect communion with Him.
- That is what it means for God's will to be done "on earth as it is in Heaven"

Secondly, **"dominionism" theology is not biblical.** In the Garden, God gave us dominion over all of the earth, but because of our fall into sin, we relinquished our dominion. **"Taking back" our dominion over all of the earth is not something that can happen here and now.** Ruling the earth is awaiting us when GOD'S KINGDOM COMES (Christ's return). **Paul explains in 1**

Corinthians 15:21-28 that we will not rule and reign with God until Christ puts every enemy under his feet, and at His coming we will rule and reign with Christ on earth, in Revelation 3:21.

²¹For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²²For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. ²⁸When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

Revelation 3:21

²¹ To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.

So far, we can conclude 3 things on the basis of the Scriptures:

- Bill Johnson/Bethel Church is preaching a false gospel
- Their "Bringing Heaven To Earth" theology is false/heretical
- Their "dominionism" theology is false/heretical

We could stop right here, because it tears down the main pillars of almost everything they profess, but they have other theologies that they preach just as often that are just as dangerously heretical.

D. Bethel Teaches A False Christ

If this evidence is not enough to lead you to repent from believing in a false gospel, perhaps the fact that **Bethel teaches a false Christ** can solidify this for you? If someone places their faith in any Christ apart from the Christ we see in Scripture, it is a Christ that cannot save. Due to the fact that Bethel teaches a false gospel, they cannot put their faith in a Christ who can save. Not only that, but the Christ they teach is not the Christ we will find in Scriptures.

-Bill Johnson teaches that Jesus had to born again

“So [Jesus] was born through Mary, the Virgin, and then he was born again in the resurrection”- Bill Johnson

- Bill Johnson dissents from the orthodox teaching of Christ’s hypostatic union of being fully God and fully man on earth.

Bill Johnson holds to a false doctrine called the “kenotic theory”.

“Jesus lived His earthly life with human limitations. He laid His divinity aside (see Phil.2:5-7) as He sought to fulfill the assignment given to Him by the Father to live life as a man without sin, and then die in the place of mankind for sin. This would be essential in His plan to redeem mankind. The sacrifice that could atone for sin had to be a lamb (powerless), and had to be spotless (without sin)

Jesus was not born again because He did not need to be Born Again. He did not have a sinful nature and He, though tempted, did not desire to rebel against the Father. He was not dead in trespasses and sins, so He did not need to be made alive. However, Bill Johnson says Jesus was born again in many places.

Charisma Magazine Article, written by Bill Johnson: “While Jesus is eternally God, He emptied Himself of His divine powers and became a man (see Phil. 2:7). It's vital to note that He did all His miracles as a man, not as God.”

- Historically, the kenotic theory doctrine has been rejected by orthodox theologians because of the way it brings into question the hypostatic union of the Son, an essential Christological doctrine.

The Kenosis heresy teaches that Jesus set aside His divinity while on Earth. According to this doctrine, Jesus was no longer divine from His birth to His ascension. Bill Johnson has also promoted this heresy in Face to Face with God on page 108. He said,

“Jesus set aside His divinity, choosing instead to live as a man completely dependent on God.”

Truth is, if Jesus set aside His divinity and was “just a man”, Jesus would have been nothing more than a man, **with no ability to be SINLESS.**

If Jesus was not divine when He died on the Cross, then He would not have been a sufficient sacrifice. In that case His death would be in vain and so would our faith. Instead, Jesus is treated like God while He is on Earth. He received worship (John 20:28, Matthew 2:2, Matthew 14:33, Matthew 28:9), claimed to be God (John 5:18, John 8:24, John 8:58), and did things only God could do all while on Earth (Matthew 9:2, Mark 2:5, 1 Peter 2:22).

Contention Two: Signs and Wonders

A. Idolatry

The first commandment is found in Exodus 20:3: “You shall have no other gods before Me.” Let’s reread Bethel’s main statement on the homepage of their church website:

“Welcome: We are a community of believers that are very passionate about the things of God. And because of this, we have a passion for people, our city, and our world. Our rich history has shaped our core values. Our culture is characterized by worship, the presence of God, family, revival, miracles and healings, and a culture of honor.”

According to Bethel Church’s statement, they are passionate about the “things of God”, and they are clearly passionate about striving to “experience the manifest presence of God” through signs and wonders...but are they passionate about Christ Himself? Hypothetically, let’s give Bethel Church the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps this is just a poorly written statement. Let’s not judge their passion for Christ Himself on this statement alone.

What we should really be asking ourselves is, does Bethel put Christ first? That doesn’t mean, “spiritual experiences”, “good worship music”, “signs and wonders”, or “miracles and healings”. I am asking you to look at Bethel and ask, is the truth of Christ and His Word exalted above all things?

Take a moment and watch Bill Johnson’s sermons- you’ll hear a lot of testimonies, experiences, “special revelation”, 90% preaching on signs and wonders and living a supernatural lifestyle. But do you hear much at all from the Scriptures? Do you hear much at all about the gospel of Christ crucified? Or do you only hear about the miracles and healings that we can receive from Jesus? Take a moment and read Bill Johnson’s blog- you will find the same things...but not Christ Himself. If you listen to Bill, you’ll be sold “The Jesus that can heal your body”, but you won’t be sold Jesus himself.

THAT IS IDOLATRY

Take a moment and listen to Kris Vallotton’s sermons...read his books, or blog...you’ll be sold an even “greater Jesus” that wants you to not only be healthy, but also wealthy! You’ll find a Jesus that is all about your DESTINY, your LEGACY, your FINANCES, your MARRIAGE, your SPIRITUAL GIFTS, etc... But you will rarely if ever find Christ and Him crucified. You’ll find a different Jesus than the one in Scripture.

When you search the word: “Gospel” on Kris’s blog, these are the options you have to choose from:

1. Podcast on the “Gospel of Power” (a podcast about signs and wonders)
2. What God Really Thinks About Divorce
3. Taking Back The Word “Christian” From The Cesspool of a Politically Correct World
4. If You Want To Change The World, Practice These 8 Things

something I found highly interesting about this article:

Kris says, "True discipleship is meant to empower people to be transformed into the image of their Creator, but **religion** redefines the terms, **conforming people into replicas of their leaders. Religion takes God's mighty men and makes them artifacts in a museum.**

- Okay Kris...have you talked to Bill? He plans on making a "House of Generals"?, and according to Bill's blog, this is what it is: "The **House of Generals** is to honor leaders around the world, **who are bringing the Kingdom of Heaven to earth...its a library and a museum containing a collection of historical literature and artifacts** from past revivals and **revivalists**....But God has let us know that if we will honor those who walked faithfully before us, then **He will give us access to their anointings.**" - Bill Johnson

Article notes (continued)

- "We have lost sight of the fact that the **Cross was for the old man not the new man,** and that **the true Christian life is not about dying for Christ, but living in the life He purchased for us to establish the Kingdom on earth!** - Kris
- **Activation for the week: "The poisonous poverty mindset reduces the Christian message to a cry for help instead of a call for leadership."** - Kris

^The whole Christian message is about the desperate cry of sinners for salvation.- The Bible

- Kris's solution to changing the world!: "Is there any place in your life where you think or act like an orphan instead of as a royal Child of God? If the answer is yes, then put that thing before God, and let the Holy Spirit speak to you about how He sees you. **If we all walk out our royal identity I believe the natural next step is a world filled with changers! We are all called to be history makers!** Are you learning to carry His power and authority into every realm of society?"

5. If You Want To Go To Church To Be Ministered To, You're Missing The Point!

6. Why Knowing Your Identity Is Way More Important Than You Realize

7. The Stupid Things That Christians Say That Make My Blood Boil

8. Welcome To The Ministry

interesting notes from this article

- Being a minister of the gospel has very little to do with our profession...When you have received Jesus, you became a part of a royal priesthood! **The good news is that you have everything that you need to start your own personal ministry!**

What does Kris describe gospel ministry as in the next sentence?:

"If you can pray, prophesy, and see healing in the church, then what's stopping you from working with Jesus in the workplace?" That's it? No mention of sharing the gospel of Christ crucified.

Most of the world, enjoys this type of false gospel because it “empowers” them, gives them hope that God will fill their wallets, makes them feel purposeful and driven towards a fantastic “destiny”, etc.

But if you look at Kris’s ministry through the lens of Scripture, you will realize that he is preaching a false, self centered, destiny driven, self improvement, wealth seeking prosperity gospel.

THIS IS IDOLATRY.

THIS IS NOT BIBLICAL PREACHING.

Look at Bill and Kris’s sermons and then compare them to the content of the sermons of the early church Apostles:

The book of Acts shows a dramatic change in the disciples. They boldly preached with confidence to thousands of people in the temple, defying the religious leaders, risking their lives because they were so zealous for the message.

What turned the fishermen into faith-filled preachers? Two things: they were convinced that Jesus was alive, and that they were given the same power that Jesus had—the Holy Spirit helped them understand and gave them courage.

The Messiah was alive, and his message was true: The time had come. The kingdom of God had come! Turn to God, and believe the wonderful news!

Jesus told them to preach, and so they preached!

But what did the disciples preach about?

Here are the verses in Acts that use the words for “preach”:

4:2 — proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead

5:42 — proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah

8:4 — proclaiming the word

8:5 — proclaimed the Messiah

8:12 — proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ

8:25, 40 — proclaiming the good news

8:35 — proclaimed the good news about Jesus

10:36 — preaching peace by Jesus Christ

11:20 — proclaiming the Lord Jesus

13:5 — proclaimed the word of God

13:32-33 — bringing the good news that God fulfilled the promise by raising Jesus
13:38 — proclaiming forgiveness of sins through Jesus
14:7, 21; 16:10 — proclaiming the good news
14:15 — bringing good news, that you should turn to God
15:7 — the message of the good news
15:35 — proclaimed the word of the Lord
17:3 — proclaiming the Messiah, Jesus
17:18 — telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection
17:23 — proclaim what you worship as unknown
20:24 — testify to the good news of God's grace
20:27 — declaring the whole purpose of God
26:23 — proclaiming light to Jews and gentiles

This is what the disciples preached on.

They preached the gospel of Jesus Christ with boldness and urgency. They didn't have time to preach in CHURCH about your marriage, how to have good friendships, how to live in prosperity, etc.

They knew the Kingdom of God was at hand, and they preached the gospel of Jesus Christ with that very thing in mind.

That was Jesus' message, too. For 40 days after his resurrection, he taught the disciples about the kingdom (Acts 1:3). What did this include? Luke tells us what he talked about during that time. On the road to Emmaus, "he interpreted to them the things about HIMSELF in all the scriptures" (Luke 24:27).

This is the kingdom message: a message about the Messiah who suffered, died, was resurrected, calls for repentance and brings forgiveness.

Throughout the book of Acts, we see the disciples preaching about Jesus, about his resurrection, about repentance, faith and salvation. Many people accepted the message. Others scoffed, and some became angry. People react in different ways to the "real Jesus."

B. Everyone Can Be "A Miracle Worker and Faith Healer"

From Kris's Blog Post: [Why Miracles, Signs and Wonders Should Be Normal For Every Christian:](#)

“I know many people admire the culture of miracles we have at Bethel, but I wish people would understand that this kind of access to the Kingdom is not supposed to be for a select few! The truth is, EVERY BELIEVER can be a MIRACLE WORKER or a HEALER. These aspects of the Christian life are not relegated to leaders in the church, or apostles or prophets.”

What does the Bible say about this?

“All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?”

1 Corinthians 12:29-30

So no- not all can be “miracle workers or faith healers.”

C. Greater Works Than Jesus Christ?

In Bills book, “**When Heaven Invades Earth**”_he writes, “The miraculous is a large part of the plan of God for this world. And it is to come through the Church.” He also teaches in his book and in his sermons that **in Christs incarnation, he emptied Himself of all divine attributes, and in His humanity is the model for our lives.** (Which is a complete perversion of the Scripture he references to justify his claim)

John 14:12 says, “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I have been doing and they will do even greater things than these, BECAUSE I AM GOING TO THE FATHER.”

In reference to this verse, Bill writes, **“Jesus’ prophecy of us doing greater works than He did has stirred the Church to look for some abstract meaning to this very simple statement. Many theologians seek to honor the works of Jesus as unattainable, which is religion, fathered by unbelief.** It does not impress God to ignore what He promised under the guise of honoring the work of Jesus on the earth. **Jesus’ statement is not that hard to understand. Greater means “greater.” And the works he referred to are signs and wonders.** It will not be a disservice to Him to have a generation obey Him, and go beyond His own *high-water mark*. He showed us what one person could do who has the Spirit without measure. What could millions do? That was His point, and it became His prophecy.” (When Heaven Invades Earth)

Why is this teaching **heretical**?

- Bethel/Bill Johnson interprets this verse at the surface level, without regard for what the text is really implying, to propel their/his signs and wonders gospel. If this verse is taken at surface level, you will read: “whoever believes in me...will do greater works than Jesus did.” And if this verse is interpreted without greater context, it means that everyone who is truly a Christian will do greater signs and wonders than Jesus.
- If we accept Bethel's teaching on signs and wonders and apply their interpretation to our understanding of a “supernatural ministry”, then **we are all doomed**. Why? **Because if the sign of someone who believes is “doing greater works than Jesus Christ”, no one is a Christian and no one has ever been a Christian.** Why? This verse cannot be referencing signs and wonders **because NO ONE in history, including the apostles have ever been able to replicate or even do greater signs and wonders than Christ did. Has anyone ever raised someone from the dead four days post-mortem? No. Has anyone else taken 5 loaves of bread and two fish, miraculously multiplied them and fed 5,000 people. No. Has anyone turned water into wine? No. Has anyone walked on water? No. No one has ever done those things, with the exception of Christ himself, and surely, no one has ever done anything more amazing.**
- So, what greater works was Jesus referring to in this passage in Scripture, for those that believe? If we lose the handle of the beginning of the verse, “whoever believes”, we will make hash of the text. **Whatever this is, it is serious, because Christ says “EVERY BELIEVER”, will do whatever these greater works are!** We can't lose handle of the first part of this verse! We can confidently know that Jesus was not referring to signs and wonders, or else he would be falsely prophesying. And we know that surely is not the case. We must ask then, what greater work did the Apostles do and what greater work can we do today that was greater than the work Jesus got to do?
- At the end of verse 12, Jesus tells the Apostles that He is commissioning us to do these greater works, **“because I am going to the Father.” (That is the WHY to the WHAT we will do.)**
- Look at John 13 (the chapter right before this passage regarding the greater works we will do.) Jesus says, **“Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come’.”**

Where was Jesus going? **He was going to the cross to die for our sins. He was going to the grave to get victory over sin and death. He was coming out of the grave triumphantly, and He was going to ascend to the right hand of the Father and rule there and intercede**

for us, and He was going to **POUR OUT the Spirit**, that is not just any spirit, but is the Spirit of the Living God, the crucified and risen Christ that had **NEVER** happened in the history of the world. What can we gain from this? This is revolutionary. This is new. And **THIS- is greater.**

- Look at John 20:21-23...”So Jesus said, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent ME, I also send YOU.’ And He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the HOLY SPIRIT. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Jesus surely wasn't telling the Apostles that they could arbitrarily decide who does and does not receive forgiveness! That would be an awfully grave responsibility, and it would contradict almost all of the New Testament. So what was Jesus saying, and how does this connect to the works we will do that are greater than the works Christ did?

- In John 20:21-23, Jesus appeared to the Apostles as the RISEN CHRIST, triumphant over death, coming as the Christ that has FINISHED the work of redemption, has paid it all, and by THAT TRUTH, message and power, He is saying that we are going to announce and proclaim the forgiveness of sinners.
- How does this connect to John 14:12? THIS IS THE GREATER WORK, THAT HAD NEVER BEEN DONE BEFORE! Before Christ's resurrection from the dead, God's people preached the forgiveness of sins in ANTICIPATION up until Christ's death on the cross.
- What are the unique greater works that we can do that everyone, including Christ, could not do? WE are not preaching in anticipation of a Messiah that will forgive sins, we are not preaching in anticipation of a Savior that will die for us, WE have the finished work of the cross, and will preach the forgiveness of sins through Christ on the basis of: “IT IS FINISHED!” THAT is the greater work, that none could do, including Christ, until His death and resurrection. EVERYTHING always points back to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But if a proper exegesis of Scripture is non-sufficient, don't stand on the Scriptures for your authoritative source of truth. Because Bethel says we can “speak things into existence”, just recite Kris Vallotton's authoritative declaration in his article, “Why Knowing Your Identity Is More Important Than You Realize”, and maybe you will one day do greater signs and wonders than Jesus Christ Himself!

“Reiterate the declaration from the video and encourage you to read this out loud today: I am amazing! I am God's greatest creation. He loves me to death. I rock. I was born to do greater works than Jesus. I was born for glory. Nations are attracted to me. I have the mind of Christ, therefore I think like God. He's my inheritance and I am His inheritance. He actually likes me and I like me too.”

C. It Is Always God's Will to Heal

If you watch any of Bill Johnson's sermons, you will hear one phrase over and over and over again: “**It Is ALWAYS God's Will To Heal Our Bodies**”. He believes that this is a part of God's will for all people here on earth, and says, “I will not allow for a gospel that allows for sickness. If you believe that God allows for sickness, you believe in a false gospel.”

In Bill's Q&A on his blog someone asked, “Is it always God's will to heal?”

He said: “How can God choose not to heal someone when He already purchased their healing? Was His blood enough for all sin, or just certain sins? Were the stripes He bore only for certain illnesses, or certain seasons of time? When He bore stripes in His body He made a payment for our miracle. He already decided to heal. You can't decide not to buy something after you've already bought it...Jesus Christ is perfect theology – He is the will of God. We can't lower the standard of scripture to our level of experience . . . or in most cases, inexperience. It's a very uncomfortable realization – not everyone can handle it. Most create doctrine that you can't find in the person of Jesus. He is the will of God.”

Bill Johnson's main preaching topic is healing and miracles- but if you look through the lens of the Scriptures, you will realize that his theology is very heretical and not the orthodox teaching of Scripture.

Questions raised by certain current healing teachings have not yet been effectively answered, and Scripture instructs us “to exhort in sound of doctrine and refute those who contradict” (Titus 1:9).

Let's look at the study of healing by examining the Scriptures cited in an attempt to prove that the atonement “guarantees” healing for our bodies here on earth.

“And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.” 1 Peter 2:24

“But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for

our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5

I would never dispute that we are healed by Jesus’ stripes.

But is the word “heal” (Hebrew “rapha”) referring specifically to **physical healing**?

A study of its usage in the Old Testament reveals that quite often it is **not** used to connote PHYSICAL HEALING at all. In many cases it was used to imply spiritual healing (e.g.: Jeremiah 3:22 — “Return, O faithless ones, I will heal (rapha) your faithlessness”, and Psalm 107:20 — “He sent His Word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions”).

When we look at the context of Isaiah 53 we discover that we could not have a more spiritual theme. This is the great prophetic passage dealing with Christ’s intercessory work between God and man. And when we examine the context of 1 Peter 2:24 we see that Peter quoted Isaiah, not in reference to physical healing, but spiritual — “And He himself bore our sins (not sickness) in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”

Certainly it is safe to say that the healing Christ bought for us extends from the spiritual over into the emotional, mental, and physical planes, but as we will later consider more deeply, the actualizing of this healing will not be fully realized until the resurrection, and thus there is no absolute guarantee of healing now.

Now, let’s explore the second major passage used to support the claim that it is ALWAYS God’s Will to heal (everytime...right this second).

“And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed, and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘He Himself took our infirmities, and carried away our diseases.’ “

Matthew 8:16-17

This is the second major passage used to support the “healing in the atonement” teaching. Since Matthew is quoting Isaiah 53, which, as we have just seen, deals with the atonement quite explicitly, and he applies the text to physical healing and deliverance, many feel that this is irrefutable proof that healing is guaranteed in the atonement.

However, such thinking overlooks one extremely significant point. Matthew tells us that this passage of Isaiah is **FULFILLED RIGHT THERE in the healing ministry of Jesus**, before the atonement ever took place.

When we examine Isaiah 53, we see that while the atonement is the central theme, the entire life and ministry of Jesus is considered, extending even beyond the Second Coming!

“For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.” (verse 2) —

“Therefore I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death” (verse 12).

The point of verse 4 is that even though the people of Israel has seen Jesus going about their land healing people of their diseases, they still considered His execution to be a judgment against Him from God: “Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”

Now- **THIS is VITAL to understand:**

That “He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases” is referring to action taken by Jesus in His healing ministry on EARTH, and not to a passive receiving of diseases and infirmities on the cross, is supported by the Greek text; took—Greek lambano = take, take away, remove; carried away—Greek bastazo = take up, carry, bear, carry away, remove (Arndt-Ginrich, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament).

Thus it is clear that while Isaiah 53:4 does refer to physical healing, its fulfillment was in the healing ministry of Jesus, as noted by Matthew, and not on the cross, and therefore it offers no guarantee of healing to us today, unless it is God's sovereign will to heal somebody.

Next, let's examine the next argument. Many argue that through Christ's atonement on the cross, He redeemed us from the curse in! What curse?

Scripture says that Christ redeemed us from the **curse of the LAW**... let's jump in.

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written; cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.” Galatians 3:13

By comparing Galatians 3:13 with Deuteronomy 21:23, “He who is hanged (on a tree) is accursed of God,” and Deuteronomy 28:15-68, which details the curses that would come upon Israel for disobedience (including various diseases) the argument is drawn that Christ bore our diseases on the cross.

However, the analogy does not follow. There is no basis to identify the “curse of the law” with the curses of Deuteronomy 28. The “curse of the law” is directly related to the issue of JUSTIFICATION, which is easily seen by studying Galatians 3 in context. (I urge you to read ALL of Galatians chapter 3 beginning to end)

Sneak peak (The curse is referring to those who insist on following the law and works to justify them.) :

“For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is

everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.’ Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for ‘The righteous man shall live by faith.’ However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, ‘He who practices them shall live by them.’ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.’ “ (Galatians 3:10–13)

One who is a serious student of the word, who studies the Word in context, can immediately discern that the curse being referred to is the curse Christ took of DAMNATION due to Jew and Gentile for their failure to keep the Law of God.

The curses in Deuteronomy 28 on the other hand, were temporal curses that would be extended to the Jews under the Lords Theocratic Kingdom in the land of Israel if they were disobedient. The absurdity of saying that Jesus bore these curses on the cross become apparent when we consider the nature of some of the curses (e.g.: mildew (verse 22), drought (verse 23)...etc...)

Let’s move on to the next point often brought up...

Many will use this verse to support their argument:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father.” (John 14:12)

Using this verse in John as a basis, Bill Johnson/Bethel stand on the belief that it is always God’s will to heal, and argue that Jesus healed all that were sick, and since He said we would do greater, not lesser works than He, if we have the faith we should expect everyone we pray for to be healed also. While it must be acknowledged that this argument sounds reasonable, there are certain inescapable flaws in it.

First, exactly what Jesus meant by “greater works” has been variously interpreted by many good scholars. **If Jesus were referring to physical miracle and healings, what “greater works” possibly could be done than those Jesus did (e.g., what could be a greater physical sign than raising the dead 4 days after Lazarus died?).**

It would seem that any “greater” work would have to be of a different kind. Thus it is the conclusion of many scholars that Jesus was anticipating the disciples enactment of the Great Commission through which by the preaching of the gospel men and women would be saved, and the Kingdom of God established on earth through the Church. (Like I referenced in the previous sub-point)

Jesus couldn’t have been referring to physical healing when He made this statement, otherwise He would be guilty of false prophesying. Why? **The simple fact is that the healing ministry of Jesus has never been reduplicated in history, even by the Apostles** (I will give examples later).

This fact is illustrated again and again even in the ministries of those who preach “healing in the atonement.” Many for whom they pray are not healed. We see from this that the healing ministry of Jesus was of a different order than that of the Church, **to establish a unique purpose; the authenticity of His claim to be the Messiah.**

Even in Jesus ministry here on earth, there was one instance that He did not heal everyone. In John 5 we read that by the pool Bethesda Jesus found **“a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered” (verse 3). Yet, after selecting only one man Jesus “slipped away while there was a crowd in that place” (verse 13). He could have healed everyone that was there, coming for healing, but as in John 9 He chose to heal only one and for the glory of God.**

NOW, having considered the Scriptures most often used to support “healing in the atonement,” let us now seek to arrive at a more biblical understanding of the relationship between the atonement and physical health. The Bible teaches that, although Christ’s work on our behalf is finished, the total effect of our redemption is **not yet complete.**

In Romans 8:30 we find that the redemptive work of God on our behalf includes predestination, calling, justification, and GLORIFICATION. The first three have already happened us, but the fourth, while assured, has not yet taken place.

That is why we read in the same chapter: **“And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY.” For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one hope for what he sees?” (verse 23, 24).**

Here Paul explains in very clear terms that the physical aspect of our redemption (glorification of our bodies, Philippians 3:21) is our great hope; something in the future that has not taken place yet.

Thus, while Christ did buy perfect health for us at the cross by dying for our sins, absolutely PERFECT health will not go into effect until the glorification of our bodies, and PERFECT health cannot be claimed now.

Does that mean that you won’t ever see a healing here on earth? No! Go and pray for people to be healed. But recognize, that a person that you pray for will only be healed if it is God’s sovereign will for that person to be healed in that moment.

If it is, GOD IS GOOD!
If it’s not, GOD IS GOOD!

Perfect health and glorification is that which we will receive in Heaven. On earth, people

must grow old and die, sometimes by sickness and disease... otherwise, we would live forever here on earth! Eternal life is a benefit of the cross we receive AFTER death.

Thus, God has not ordained that sickness be totally removed from our experience yet, but it is a part of what will be in Heaven: “And He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall be no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

Those who teach that it is always God’s will to heal also advocate the doctrine that it is always God’s will for us to be prosperous; and little wonder, for the same sentiment is behind both. It is a sentiment that is not patient to wait for the day described in Revelation 21:4 above, that is unwilling to face the full extent of the cross that God has called us to during the brief span of our days here. It cannot quite accept the fact that God has called us to **many SUFFERINGS for a season.**

Yet, Scripture emphatically teaches that suffering is a central part of God’s plan and way of working with us here and now. The following are only a small sampling of what could be cited to prove this point:

John 16:33: In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.

Romans 8:17: If indeed we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

2 Corinthians 1:5: For just as the suffering of Christ are our in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:8–10: We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

Philippians 1:29: For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.

James 5:10: As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

If the prophets are set forth as examples to us, it must mean that we are meant to follow in their footsteps. One wonders what these men would have thought of a doctrine that it is always God’s will for His people to prosper physically, and it is their own fault if they do not, especially when one reads Hebrews 11: 35-38:

“ . . .others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better

resurrection; and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in desert and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.”

These men who are set before us as examples hardly illustrate the current concept of spirituality which is measured by one’s wardrobe and automobiles.

This is not to deny that God often does prosper His children. Paul exemplified a well-balanced perspective when he wrote: “I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need” (Philippians 4:12).

When the Scriptural basis for “healing in the atonement” is shown to be faulty, its advocates often fall back upon the sentiment **that it is inconceivable for our Father in heaven to ever will that His children be sick!**

To this we must counter, why would He never will us to be sick, except to spare us from suffering?

But we’ve just seen clearly that it is His will that we suffer in many ways during this life.

Our suffering is inextricably connected to our mortal bodies. **As Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:10, we are always bearing about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus.**

All diseases find their completion in death, and yet God has not removed physical death from the experience of His children.

It is absurd and without basis to suppose that the same God Who ordained that we suffer for a time in these degenerating, death bound bodies would at the same time ordain that we have perfect health. It would seem obvious that if God wanted us to have perfect health now He’d give us the proper mode to express it: **a glorified, immortal body!**

Those who deny that it could ever be God’s will for us to be sick insist also that Satan is always the author of sickness. It is true that we need to be discerning about sickness, for Satan could be its source (Luke 13:16). However, it is unbiblical to say that God Himself has never sent sickness upon people. Again, just a few examples:

Exodus 4:11: And the LORD said to him, ‘Who has made man’s mouth; Or Who makes him dumb or deaf?, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?’

2 Kings 15:5: And the Lord struck the King, so that he was a leper to the day of his death.

Luke 1:19-20: And the angel answered and said to him, 'I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words.'

As it turns out, there are quite a few more instances in Scripture where God is identified as the source of a physical affliction than there are instances of Satan being so identified.

So, why would God ever send sickness upon His own?

As John says: "If we ask anything ACCORDING TO HIS WILL He will hear us"
(1 John 5:4).

It is not always God's will to heal us because at times He has a positive purpose in affliction. God allowed affliction to come upon Job for the purpose of proving the genuineness of Job's commitment to Him (Job 1:6 – 2:10).

Some argue that while God will bring affliction upon us for a positive purpose, physical disease is not included among the ways in which He deals with His children, except in judgment.

However, God Himself stated that Job did nothing to deserve the trials that came upon Him (chapter 2, verse 3), and yet Job's most severe affliction was a physical disorder: "sore boils from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head" (chapter 2, verse 7).

It may be countered that this incident was in the Old Testament, before the atonement guaranteed perfect health for all.

However, it appears the Apostle James did not see things this light. He set forth God's dealings with Job, and Job's endurance through them, as a pattern and example for New Testament believers (James 5:10, 11).

**"Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about! The Lord is full of compassion and mercy."
James 5:10-11**

Another instance in which God used an affliction for a person's good and His glory was with the Apostle Paul! (We don't know if the affliction was sickness or disease, but it was an affliction allowed by God, used for Paul's good and God's glory.)

God allowed affliction to come upon Paul, not answering his prayer for deliverance, so that Paul would not become too high minded (egotistical) as a result of the visions and revelations he had

(2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

Paul prayed three times for God to remove His affliction from Him- to which God said no! The Lord said: **“My grace is sufficient for you, for my POWER is perfected in WEAKNESS”** (verse 9).

Oftentimes, we think the greatest displays of God's power is when our affliction is gone. But Scripture says, that God's power is actually perfected when we are at our weakest!

Paul learned to be content with this abiding affliction, for the Lord taught him that at the very moment that he was weakest in himself, the power of the Lord would be most evident through him, bringing glory to God rather than Paul (verses 9, 10). This lesson desperately needs to be learned by any of us who are being influenced by **the false unlimited healing/prosperity doctrines today.**

Affliction can certainly be a tool for good in God's hands. In Psalm 119 we read the following:

Verse 67: Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Thy word.

Verse 91: It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Thy statutes

Verse 75: I know, OH LORD, that Thy judgments are righteous, and that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me.

Furthermore, there has been times, even in Scripture, when God's people have had to accept and live with illness. Rather than telling him to “claim his healing,” Paul gave medicinal advice to Timothy: **“No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and frequent ailments” (1 Timothy 5:23).**

This verse should have special significance to all who think the Bible supports some of the extreme teachings of our day! **Where is Paul's “word of faith” and “positive confession”?** By giving medical advice, and telling Timothy he has frequent ailments (thus acknowledging their ongoing existence rather than “speaking healing into being”) Paul is completely out of line with the current wind of doctrine.

As Kenneth Hagin puts it” “People confess their lack and build up a sense of lack in themselves. As they confess these things, these lacks gain ascendancy in their lives.”

This is not to deny that there is some psychological truth in what Hagin is saying.

Unfortunately, however, many have tried to alter this into an unyielding spiritual principle that is so exacting that one must always be painfully conscious of every word he says, for fear he speak something destructive into being. (And as Scripture says, God certainly has NOT given us a spirit of fear)

Paul also wrote: “Trophimus I left sick at Miletus” (2 Timothy 4:20*) In both cases we find

that sickness had an effect upon the ministry of the apostles, even as many have to make adjustments in their ministries because of it today.

***Epaphroditus, too, was deathly sick in the presence of Paul and Paul implies no expectation of his healing, but rather states that his recovery was due to the mercy (not obligation) of God (Phil., 2:25–27).**

Some will no doubt argue that Paul was unable to obtain healing for Trophimus because of Trophimus lack of faith, as it is held by some that one must have faith for his own healing, and the great faith of another cannot overcome one's own belief.

However, the same people are often surprised to find out that **the Apostle Paul himself had to endure an illness:**

“But you know that it as because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time; and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of god, as Christ Jesus Himself. Where then is that sense of blessing you had: For I bear you witness, that if possible you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.”

Galatians 4:13–15

Paul's reference to his eyes is a clear indication that his illness had something to do with his eyes, and the expressed concern and sympathy of the Galatians indicates that he had not been healed. When Paul says that they did not despise or loathe his bodily condition he means that they did not allow an unhealed illness to prevent them from receiving the authority and authenticity of his apostleship.

Contention Three: Word of Faith movement

In addition to the heretical teachings that Bethel pulls from the Health, Wealth, and Prosperity Gospel, and the NAR (New Apostolic Reformation), **they also base much of their teachings in the Word of Faith movement.**

What is the Word of Faith movement?

Word of Faith teaching is decidedly unbiblical. It is not a denomination and does not have a formal organization or hierarchy. Instead, it is a movement that is heavily influenced by a number of high-profile pastors and teachers such as **Kenneth Hagin, Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, Paul and Jan Crouch, and Fred Price.**

The Word of Faith movement grew out of the Pentecostal movement in the late 20th century. Its founder was E. W. Kenyon, who studied the metaphysical New Thought teachings of Phineas Quimby. Mind science (where "name it and claim it" originated) was combined with

Pentecostalism, resulting in a peculiar mix of orthodox Christianity and mysticism. Kenneth Hagin, in turn, studied under E. W. Kenyon and made the Word of Faith movement what it is today. Although individual teachings range from completely heretical to completely ridiculous, what follows is the basic theology most Word of Faith teachers align themselves with.

At the heart of the Word of Faith movement is the belief in the "force of faith." It is believed words can be used to manipulate the faith-force, and thus actually create what they believe Scripture promises (health and wealth). Laws supposedly governing the faith-force are said to operate independently of God's sovereign will and that God Himself is subject to these laws. This is nothing short of idolatry, turning our faith—and by extension ourselves—into god.

From here, its theology just strays further and further from Scripture: it claims that God created human beings in His literal, physical image as little gods. Before the fall, humans had the potential to call things into existence by using the faith-force. After the fall, humans took on Satan's nature and lost the ability to call things into existence. In order to correct this situation, Jesus Christ gave up His divinity and became a man, died spiritually, took Satan's nature upon Himself, went to hell, was born again, and rose from the dead with God's nature. After this, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to replicate the Incarnation in believers so they could become little gods as God had originally intended.

Following the natural progression of these teachings, **as little gods we again have the ability to manipulate the faith-force and become prosperous in all areas of life. Illness, sin, and failure are the result of a lack of faith, and are remedied by confession—claiming God's promises for oneself into existence. Simply put, the Word of Faith movement exalts man to god-status and reduces God to man-status. Needless to say, this is a false representation of what Christianity is all about. Obviously, Word of Faith teaching does not take into account what is found in Scripture. Personal revelation, not Scripture, is highly relied upon in order to come up with such absurd beliefs, which is just one more proof of its heretical nature.**

Countering Word of Faith teaching is a simple matter of reading the Bible. God alone is the Sovereign Creator of the Universe (Genesis 1:3; 1 Timothy 6:15) and does not need faith—He is the object of faith (Mark 11:22; Hebrews 11:3). God is spirit and does not have a physical body (John 4:24). Man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26, 27; 9:6), but this does not make him a little god or divine. Only God has a divine nature (Galatians 4:8; Isaiah 1:6-11, 43:10, 44:6; Ezekiel 28:2; Psalm 8:6-8). Christ is Eternal, the Only Begotten Son, and the only incarnation of God (John 1:1, 2, 14, 15, 18; 3:16; 1 John 4:1). In Him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9). By becoming a man, Jesus gave up the glory of heaven but not His divinity (Philippians 2:6-7)

The Word of Faith movement is deceiving countless people, causing them to grasp after a way of life and faith that is not biblical. **At its core is the same lie Satan has been telling since the**

Garden: “You shall be as God” (Genesis 3:5). Sadly, those who buy into the Word of Faith movement are still listening to him. Our hope is in the Lord, not in our own words, not even in our own faith (Psalm 33:20-22). Our faith comes from God in the first place (Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 12:2) and is not something we create for ourselves. So, we must be wary of the Word of Faith movement and any church that aligns itself with Word of Faith teachings.

Bill Johnson/Kris Vallotton are most definitely aligned with the Word of Faith theology.

Examples:

From a Bill Johnson sermon:

“As you’re praying over them, command now the spirit of affliction, ‘Loose that hip, in Jesus’ name.’ Command it gone. Just speak health into that hip. Some actually need a creative miracle. There’s degenerative condition in the joint. So the worlds were made when God spoke them into being, so speak to that new hip.”

The movement teaches that God wants believers to thrive financially, be in good health, have flourishing marriages, and be prosperous across the board. (Primarily taught by Kris Vallotton, but also by Bill Johnson.)

“Suffering comes from Satan, and not from God. The idea that God would use suffering for our good is a lie from Satan and goes against God’s Word” (Bill Johnson, Face to Face with God).

The Apostle Paul, wouldn’t agree with you in the slightest, Bill.

In a sermon preached by Georgian Banov, at Bethel Church he explains that: **“God wants to cancel the debts of everyone in the room and announces that God’s will is for everyone to own a large house.”**

It is an example of the so-called prosperity gospel, which is preached at Bethel Church and elsewhere.

Bill also teaches that “without our prayers, and declarations, Gods hands are tied.”

They have such a low reverence for the absolute sovereignty of God, and through their teachings, evidently show they have an absurdly exalted image of us, and our power to “speak things into existence.”

Contention Four: Manifestations/Drunkenness/ Kundalini Spirit.

Bethel only uses two verses to justify the bodily “Holy Spirit manifestations” that happen to their leaders and the people of their congregation.

1. They note the Day of Pentecost, when the people were accused of being “drunk”. (Acts 2)
2. “And do not get drunk with wine, for that leads to debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,”
Ephesians 5:18

First of all, **nowhere in the Bible does it say to be drunk in the Spirit.** When the Bible speaks of being drunk, it always has a negative connotation. The only place in Scripture that alludes to the idea of “spiritual drunkenness” is Isaiah 29:9-14, and **it refers to God’s judgment upon sin and apostasy.**

Bethel Church promotes the false idea of being “drunk in the Spirit” or being filled with “drunken glory.” Congregations are instructed to “**get drunk,**” “**take another drink,**” etc. **Stumbling gaits, slurred speech, falling to the ground, and other odd behaviors are their “proof” of the work of the Holy Spirit.** In addition, they practice things like **“Holy Spirit led encounters with God,” “putting their faces in honey pots and getting ‘drunk in the spirit,’” “fire tunnels,” and much more.**

None of this is biblical, it is most definitely **not** the **Holy Spirit** (who brings forth the **fruit of self control**), but it **IS** most definitely a **demonic spirit.**

(Continue to the next page)



A graphic image of what second year looks like from David 🍷🍷🍷

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... See More



The false teachers, like Bill Johnson and Kris Vallotton who promote being drunk in the Spirit, point to **Acts 2:13** as justification for their congregations abhorrent practice. On the day of Pentecost, as the apostles were preaching the gospel, some in the crowd said, **“They have had too much wine.”**

The accusation was obviously **1. Because the people were speaking in tongues (languages they had never heard before), 2. a mockery of the apostles, and 3. Peter flatly denies any hint of inebriation (verse 15).**

Yet, Bethel takes this jest from an ungodly crowd and use it as their “evidence” that Peter and the apostles were preaching in a senseless stupor. Such twisting of Scripture not only demeans the apostles, **it also dishonors the Holy Spirit.**

Lastly, Bethel justifies this demonic behavior by using the Scripture from **Ephesians 5:18, that says: “And do not get drunk with wine, which leads to debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,”**

Yet, in this misapplication of Scripture they do three things:

1. They ignore the verses that come before verse 18
2. They ignore the COMMA after the phrase, “but be filled with the Spirit,”
3. They ignore the verses after verse 18

The apostle Paul wrote in verses 15-18 “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,” (Ephesians 5:15-18).

Paul says that getting drunk is akin to our old way of life with its worldly and self-serving desires. Such behavior is debased and “leads to debauchery” (compare Colossians 1:21; Romans 13:13). The word debauchery is a translation of a Greek word meaning “**lawless insolence or unmanageable caprice.**” Paul deliberately **contrasts the state of drunkenness (a loss of control)** with the **indwelling of the Spirit of God** (a gain of self-control, Galatians 5:23).

God wants every aspect of our lives as believers to be under the complete control of the Holy Spirit. **This does not come by drunkenness, and it does not mimic its effects.**

Acting drunk and blaming it on the Spirit of God is sin. Those who teach spiritual intoxication are more closely allied with Bacchus, the Roman god of wine and drunkenness, than with the true God of the Bible. Being filled with the Spirit is not some ecstatic or emotionally charged experience. It is not a heavenly high or a spiritual buzz. Being filled with the Spirit is a steady submission of one's life to the God of glory (1 John 3:24).

Lastly, when using this verse, they ignore the **COMMA** right after the phrase “but be filled with the Spirit,” - Paul wasn't done! The statement wasn't over. **Paul explains what it actually looks like to be “filled with the Spirit” after verse 18.**

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that leads to debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, **speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.**”

Ephesians 5:18-21

So- if this Spirit that is causing these **ungodly, uncontrollable and abhorrent** behaviors is NOT the Holy Spirit, what Spirit is it?

If you search for **Kundalini spirit** and **Shakti** on the Internet, you will find that people in the New Age and Eastern religions still experience these powerful manifestations. Often this is with the help of a Guru, who touches them on the forehead so that they can experience a "Kundalini Awakening".

As researcher Robert Walker wrote, "The meetings which mystic Hindu gurus hold are called 'Darshan'. At these meetings devotees go forward to receive spiritual experience from a touch by the open palm of the hand, often to the forehead, by the guru in what is known as the Shakti Pat or divine touch. The raising of the spiritual experience is called raising Kundalini. After a period when the devotee has reached a certain spiritual elevation they begin to shake, jerk, or hop or squirm uncontrollably, sometimes breaking into uncontrolled animal noises or laughter as they reach an ecstatic high. These manifestations are called 'Kriyas'. Devotees sometimes roar like lions and show all kinds of physical signs during this period. Often devotees move on to higher states of spiritual consciousness and become inert physically and appear to slip into an unconsciousness."

So, what is the general outward manifestation of a Kundalini Spirit?

Unholy laughing, uncontrollable laughing, involuntary falling, jerking, roaring, barking, hissing, crying, body contortions, shaking, muscle twitches, spasms, postures or moving one's body in unusual ways, drunkenness.

What is the general outward manifestation of what these false Christian movements are calling "the Holy Spirit"?

Unholy laughing, uncontrollable laughing, involuntary falling, jerking, roaring, barking, hissing, crying, body contortions, shaking, muscle twitches, spasms, postures or moving one's body in unusual ways, drunkenness.

Nowhere in Scripture will you find any such support for any of these practices or behaviors. In fact, as I showed above, you will find the exact opposite.

This is not divine, this is divination.

To conclude, I would like to end with this:

My intention is **not** to cause emotional harm to anyone at Bethel, because of the things I've stated in this document. Scripture not only commands us to rebuke and correct false doctrine, but it also calls us to expose false teachings and false teachers. (Ephesians 5:11, Romans 16:17-18, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Galatians 1:6-9, 1 John 4:1, 1 Timothy 5:10, Jude 1:4, 1

Timothy 4:1, Ephesians 5:6-13, 2 Peter 2:1, 2 John 1:10, 2 Peter 2:1-3, John 7:24, 2 John 1:7-11, 1 Timothy 6:3-5, Ephesians 4:14, 1 John 2:4, Titus 1:10-16, 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 2 Timothy 4:2, 2 Thessalonians 3:6, Titus 1:9, Titus 3:10-11)

I know that in our first meeting you told me that you found it dishonorable that I wouldn't

1. Come to my Revival Group Pastor first
2. And that I would post things that are against Bethel and their teachings online.

To that, I must reiterate that my problem is not with my revival group pastor. My problem is with "the Shepherds" and "teachers" of this House. The Biblical thing to do, would be to talk with them directly. I attempted to set up a 15 minute conversation with Kris Vallotton and he said it was "impossible."

In addition, Bill and Kris have been rebuked countless times from other brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ, and never have they ever repented of these false and abhorrent teachings. Scripture warns of the coming destruction and judgement for false teachers, so in the efforts of this document, and social media postings, I pray that God grants each of you the gift of repentance before it is too late. I come to you in love, because I care about your souls, and where you will spend eternity. To this, you may be scoffing- who am I to be "worried about your souls"? All I ask is that you diligently study the Scriptures to test if you are truly in Christ.

I would highly appreciate if you would send this document to Bill and Kris. If they truly care about their sheep, or at the very least their students at BSSM, a conversation with them and I should be had. These are not light issues. These are salvation issues.

I have kept my word, and have not posted about Bethel and will not post about Bethel until after we discuss this document.

However, if there is no repentance from Bill and Kris and the leadership of Bethel Church for the false gospel/Christ they preach, the various false doctrines they teach, or the ungodly practices and behaviors they permit, **I will continue to biblically expose Bethel.** I am not doing it for my own glory- I am truly nothing, but a woman who wants to serve and honor Christ. I am doing it because I love and honor God, I love and honor what His Word says, and because I love you all and even the people you have led astray, and biblically it is my responsibility to warn the flock.

"I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!"

Galatians 1:6-9

Paul makes it abundantly clear, that if you continue in the false gospel you are preaching, you have not only completely deserted Christ, but you will be accursed. Again, I am warning you in fear and trembling, and in love for you. **Please repent.**

Thank you for taking the time necessary to read this document.

-Lindsay Davis
(First Year BSSM Student)

THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD

“For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void. For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, “I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.” Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

1 Corinthians 1:17-25

.....DEMONSTRATION OF POWER

“And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.”

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

The text in the immediate context

The Apostle Paul speaks about his ministry compared to the ministry of those who preached the gospel with persuasive words of wisdom and he refers to the time when he preached the gospel in Corinth

To understand what this demonstration of the Spirit and of the power means, we must look at what Paul’s previous ministry in Corinth in the book of Acts...

After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers. And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. But when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." Then he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue. Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized. And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city." And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. (Acts 18:1-11)(NASB)

This demonstration of the Spirit is the vision that Paul had in that night, but especially people who came to God and were saved.

The demonstration of the power are the transformed lives of people
In the same I Epistle to the Corinthians the Apostle Paul bears another interesting testimony about the power of God's work in that city. Here it is:

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)(NASB)

Isn't this the demonstration of the power when people who had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate (the homosexual men who are prostitutes), homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, swindlers were washed, sanctified and justified? The transformed life and deliverance from sin is a strong demonstration of the work of the Holy Spirit and of the power of God that works in those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

.....WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD/WORKS OF GOD WE OUGHT TO DO?.....

"Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you,

because God the Father has set His seal on Him.” Then they said to Him, “WHAT SHALL WE DO, SO THAT WE MAY WORK THE WORKS OF GOD?”

Jesus answered and said to them, “THIS is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’ ”

Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.” And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. THIS IS THE WILL OF THE FATHER who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.””

John 6:26-40

(The context of this verse is connected to the feeding of the 5,000. The crowd is following Jesus purely for the physical food that he offered them, but Christ is saying “I am the bread of life!”. This is clearly showing that signs and wonders (the gifts of health, wealth, food, etc.) aren’t the end goal, but faith in Christ and His work is.)

Of course Bethel would reply, that we need signs and wonders for the message to have power. And I would reply that miracles don’t always lead to saving faith:

“But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Luke 16:31

Luke 17:11 - Cleansing of the 10 lepers

.....THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING.....

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. FOR I DELIVERED TO YOU AS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE WHAT I ALSO RECEIVED: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1 Peter 2:9-10

“And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.”

Acts 10:42-43

.....HOW DOES GOD DEMONSTRATE HIS LOVE???.

“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

Romans 5:6-11

“By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

1 John 4:9-10

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

Ephesians 2:4-8, 10

.....THE SCRIPTURES.....

“Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

II Timothy 3:12-17

••••DO NOT TAMPER GODS WORD••••

“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”

2 Corinthians 4:1-6

“Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. And He said to them, “Go into all the world and PREACH THE GOSPEL to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and PREACHED everywhere, the Lord working with them and CONFIRMING THE WORD through the ACCOMPANYING signs. Amen.”

Mark 16:14-20

“For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” How then shall they call on Him in

whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?" So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world."

Romans 10:11-18

"Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that REPENTANCE and REMISSION OF SINS SHOULD BE PREACHED IN HIS NAME TO ALL NATIONS, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.""

Luke 24:46-49 NKJV

"In this the love of God was MADE MANIFEST among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1 John 4:9-10

"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."

Ephesians 1:11-14

"But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

Romans 3:21-28

"But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for

fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and IF THERE IS ANY OTHER THING CONTRARY TO SOUND DOCTRINE, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.”

I Timothy 1:8-11

..... WHY DID JESUS COME INTO THE WORLD

“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”

I Timothy 1:15

.....WHY WAS THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN TO US??.....

What is the primary reason the Holy Spirit had to be sent to earth?

Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to “convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8, ESV). The Spirit testifies of Christ (John 15:26), pointing people to the Lord.

After one is converted:

- He is our helper (John 14:26)
- He indwells us and seals us until the Day of Redemption (Ephesians 1:13, and Ephesians 4:30)
- He assists us in prayer (Jude 1:20)
- The Holy Spirit regenerates and renews us (Titus 3:5)
- He baptizes us into the Body of Christ (Romans 6:3)
- He sanctifies us (Galatians 5:19-26)
- And he distributed spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4)

.....WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE IMITATORS OF GOD.....

“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but now

you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

Ephesians 5:1-9, 11-14

Chapter 5 covers two important themes: obedience to God in our lives, and the proper relationship between husbands and wives. This first section discusses how believers are to be imitators of God, with a particular focus on the love of Christ (Ephesians 5:1–21). Our practical goals are summed up with the word "imitators." Paul uses a commanding tone here: the phrase "be imitators" is an imperative. Paul commands those who follow God to imitate Him. This means striving to do as He would do.

Paul also explains the mindset which ought to motivate Christians towards obedience. Believers in Christ enjoy a Father–child relationship with God. A child naturally seeks to copy what he or she sees in a loving father. Believers in Jesus are to likewise copy what they learn about God.

.....JESUS DID NOT SET ASIDE HIS DIVINITY. HE SET ASIDE HIS RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES AS GOD.....

Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Philippians 2:6-8

.....THE WORD OF GOD ENDURES FOREVER. SIGNS AND WONDERS WILL GO AWAY, SPIRITUAL GIFTS WILL GO AWAY, BUT CHRIST WILL ENDURE FOREVER.....

"Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. For, " ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." And this is the word which was preached to you."

1 Peter 1:22-25

