

# **WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT FALSE TEACHERS?**

Ephesians 4:11-14 “that we may **no longer be children**, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”

Colossians 2:8 “**See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition**, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.” (ESV)

**What is a prophet? How can I recognize a true prophet from a false prophet?** A prophet is a messenger of God who carries a message directly and personally related and is held to 100% consistency with Scripture and 100% fulfillment of any predictive statements. (Deuteronomy 13:1-5, 18: 15-22)

**What is the difference between a prophet and a teacher?** Both roles include the element of teaching, but a prophet claims a direct encounter with God (dream, vision, meeting, voice, event, etc.) where God revealed or spoke a particular message to him.

**How can I recognize a true teacher from a bad teacher? A bad teacher from a false teacher?** A bad teacher may misunderstand issues in Scripture or just do a poor job at instructing and exhorting people. A false teacher teaches “a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Timothy 6:3) and goes against “sound doctrines” (Titus 1:9) specifically with an understanding towards who God is, what salvation is, and what the Scriptures say.

**Isn't it wrong to publicly call out preachers, teachers, Christians, etc.?** The issue of “opinions” between Christian brothers is different from the issue of “false teachings.” Paul warns “not to quarrel over opinions” (v.1) in Romans 14, pointing out the dangers of “passing judgment” on a brother in Christ and how it can “destroy the work of God” (v.20). However, God commands us to “judge” those inside the church when their lifestyles (1 Corinthians 5:9-13) do not line up with God’s Word. God also commands us to watch out for and confront false teachers who “teach a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Timothy 6:3). Pastors are specifically tasked to 1) “give instruction in sound doctrine” and 2) “rebuke those who contradict it” (Titus 1:9).

**Should a false teacher be called out by name? If so, when?** When a specific false teaching or teacher is affecting a body of believers (i.e. family, small group, church, denomination, region, nation), that false teaching and teacher must be named and confronted. Paul does this with both false teachings (1 Timothy 1:3-20 ; 6:2-10, Jude 1, 2 Peter 2, & many more) and with particular names (Alexander, Hymenaeus, & Philetus in 1 Timothy 1:20 and 2 Timothy 2:17)

**What are some examples of false teachings? What are some characteristics of false teachers?** There are many examples of false teachers with common descriptions (Galatians, 2 Peter, 1 & 2 Timothy, 1 & 2 John, Jude) that they may look and sound like Christians but that their teachings and lifestyle are not consistent with Scripture.

**False Teachers: Watch Out!**

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### **Believers Mature At Different Paces**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Level Issues: Allowable Individual Differences** “As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ...So then each of us will give an account to God.” (Romans 14:1-12)

### **Less Faithful Teachers: Believing Christians, in Error**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Level Issues: Denominational Differences** “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.” (James 3:1)

### **False Teachers Misrepresent God & the Gospel**

**1<sup>st</sup> Level Issues: Christian vs. Non-Christian: Essential Teachings** “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20)

• *Who is God? What is the Gospel? What are the Scriptures?*

1. **PREPARE!** Their Presence is Guaranteed but is not Obvious to All – v.1

2. **WATCH!** False Teachers Are Characterized by:

False Words – v.3 ; Speaking Ignorantly – v.12 ; Endorse Sin – v.2, 13-15, 18 ; Greedy v.3, 14 ; Proud w/no accountability – v.10, 18 (Jude 8) ; Make Empty Promises – v.19 ; Rely on Experience/Dreams (Jude 8) ; Speak Flippantly To Satan/Demons (2 Pet 2:10-13; Jude 8-10) Have Some Scriptural Knowledge, But Wander from It – v.20-22

3. **CORRECT & WARN** Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. (Jude 1:3)

• **Their Teachings Are Dangerous – v.1-3 – “destructive heresies”**

• **False Teachings Are Characterized by: (Example, Pergamum, Revelation 2:12-17)**

*Positive Thinking* (self-focused prayers, name it/claim it, declarations)

*Partial Truths* (highlight the “positive”/easy, ignore the “negative”/difficult)

*Promises* (worship the gifts, not the giver)

*Health, Wealth, & Prosperity* (worldly-focused: good things into god things)

*Legalism* (works based salvation, self-righteousness)

*License* (freedom to sin) “pervert the grace of our God into sensuality” (Jude 1:4)

*False Religions* “deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:4)

• **Their Punishment Is Guaranteed – v.1-10 (Jude)**

### **The Lord Knows How to Rescue the Righteous**

(v.7-9) The Righteous Are... “distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked”... “as that righteous man [Lot] lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard”

**Matthew 15:1–9** “Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, [2] “Why do your disciples **break the tradition of the elders?** For they do not wash their hands when they eat.” [3] He answered them, “**And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?** [4] For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ [5] But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,” [6] he need not honor his father.’ So **for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God.** [7] You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: [8] “**This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; [9] in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**” (ESV)

**Mark 7:1–13** “[7] **in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**’ [8] **You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.**” [9] And he said to them, “You have a fine way of **rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!** ... [13] **thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.**” (ESV)

Galatians 1:13–16 “For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. [14] And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, **so extremely zealous was I for the traditions** of my fathers.” (ESV)

**How can you call them false teachers when some of these people have doctrinal statements on their website and do many good things in getting the Bible and gospel into the hands of so many?** Christianity is not a salvation of works and although some “good fruits” may seem exist in these ministries, they only mask the lies. The ends of a ministry (salvations, missions, good works) do not justify the means (a false gospel).

**When false teachers lead people to Christ, are these converts false believers?** Not necessarily. If these believers have understood the gospel falsely, then their trust and faith in Jesus may be out of a greater love of Jesus’ gifts rather than Jesus. Even if they have become true followers of Jesus, they need to study the Word of God, test their teachers, and be extremely cautious before recommending a teacher to someone else.

**What is the Word of Faith movement and “prosperity gospel”? Why is it a problem?** The Word of Faith movement and “prosperity gospel” teaches several false doctrines such as (quotes of summary issues from <http://www.watchman.org/profiles/pdf/wordfaithprofile.pdf>, p.2-4):

- **“There are ‘anointed’ apostles and prophets today.”**
- **“God speaks words of faith with his mouth.”**
- “Human beings were created to be gods.”
- “Jesus Christ is God incarnate – and so are we.”
- “Jesus died spiritually and was born again.”
- **“We should speak words of faith like God does”**
- **“God wants us to be healthy and wealthy now”**

Why are these wrong? Here some short summary corrective statements:

- **“Modern revelations should be viewed with skepticism”**
- **“God does not need to speak ‘words of faith.’”**
- “Human beings were never gods and never will be gods.”
- “Jesus is uniquely God incarnate.”
- “Jesus did not die spiritually and was not born again.”
- **“Faith means trusting in God for the future, not claiming rights for the present.”**
- **“Christ’s redemption assures us of perfect health and wealth – in the resurrection.”**

[www.gotquestions.org/prosperity-gospel.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/prosperity-gospel.html)

[www.gotquestions.org/Word-Faith.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/Word-Faith.html)

**What are some examples of Scriptures that are commonly misinterpreted and misapplied by the Word of Faith movement and “prosperity gospel”?** References are to *Health, Wealth, & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* By David Jones and Russell Woodbridge

## HEALTH-FOCUSED

- **3 John 2** – “Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.” – “Prosperity teachers interpret this verse to mean that God wants all believers to ‘prosper in all things.’...John’s purpose in writing 3 John 2 was not to teach doctrine; rather, he was simply opening his letter with a greeting. ...the Greek term translated ‘prosperity,’ which is only used four times in Scripture, does not connote prosperity in terms of gaining material possessions. Rather, the word means ‘to grant a prosperous expedition and expeditious journey’ or ‘to lead by a direct and easy way.’” (Jones & Woodbridge, 99-100).
- **Isaiah 53:4-5** “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and **with his wounds we are healed.**” Prosperity preachers will reference the later part of verse 5, “with his wounds we are healed” and will focus on God’s atonement (sacrifice on the cross) being focused on our physical healing. “First Peter 2:24 further clarifies the meaning of Isaiah 53:4-5. Peter writes, ‘He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we may die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ...the context of Isaiah 53:5 indicates that the healing cited by the prophet is spiritual in nature – that is, the remission of sin.’” (Jones & Woodbridge, 91).

## WEALTH-FOCUSED

- **Malachi 3:10** “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.” “One of the most prominent characteristics of prosperity theologians is their seeming fixation with the act of giving...often promot[ing] a give-to-get mentality. All believers need to do is sow a seed of faith – that is, donate money to the ministry- and God will bless their marriages, finances, or whatever help is desired. Within the prosperity system, the goal in giving is ultimately to serve oneself instead of others.” (Jones and Woodbridge, 100-101). Prosperity teachers misunderstanding of prayers to God for provision shows itself when they emphasize greedy wants instead of basic needs (“give us each day our daily bread” in Luke 11:3, “if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content” in 1 Timothy 6:8, & “no more need” in Malachi 3:10).
- **Galatians 6:7** “Do not be deceived, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” Prosperity gospel preachers emphasizing “sowing” in order to “reap” using this verse, missing the context that this passage is about reaping eternal life verses reaping corruption, not about reaping temporal/earthly rewards.
- **2 Corinthians 9:6** “The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” The greater context of this passage (v.6-15) is that what we reap is spiritual fruit for the purpose of meeting one another’s needs (not greed...see 2 Corinthians 9:11-12, ‘the needs of the saints’). Prosperity gospel preachers will often redefine their wants/desires as “needs.”

## PROSPERITY-FOCUSED

- **John 10:10** “**The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.**” Life that is abundant is synonymous with “eternal life” or “the life to come” which is ultimately focused on God and heavenly things, not on earthly/temporary things. Prosperity theologians like to emphasize “abundant living” here and now, redefining it as material and worldly success, ignoring the warnings of Scripture such as 1 John 2:15-16 “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.” Abundant life is all about an eternity with Jesus, not an accumulation of material possessions.
- **Philippians 4:19** “**And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.**” Prosperity gospel preachers will point to God’s desire to satisfy us here and now with his “riches,” ignoring the countless Scriptures warning against wealth, embracing a right understanding of suffering and perseverance, and overlooking the fact that our “rich” inheritance is found only in Christ.
- **2 Corinthians 8:9** “**For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.**” “Paul is not teaching that Christ died on the cross for the purpose of increasing one’s material net worth. In fact, he is actually teaching the exact opposite. Contextually, it is clear that Paul was teaching the Corinthians that since Christ accomplished so much for them through the atonement, they ought to empty themselves of their riches in service of the Savior. This is why just five verses later Paul urges the Corinthians to give their wealth to their needy brothers, writing ‘your abundance at the present time should supply their need...that there might be fairness.’ (2 Corinthians 8:14).” (Jones and Woodbridge, 90).

## WORDS OF FAITH

- **Proverbs 18:21** “**Death and life are in the power of the tongue**, and those who love it will eat its fruits.” “Prosperity gospel teachers stress that there is power in our words. In support of their claim they quote verses such as Proverbs 18:21. ...Yet, a look at the full context of this verse [including v.20] sheds more light on its meaning...Old Testament scholar Duane Garrett writes, “The purpose of these verses is to warn against being too much in love with one’s own words.’ ...this verse does not suggest that words have creative power, but rather that words can have both positive and negative effects upon people. As the Bible exhorts elsewhere, then, use your tongue wisely (see James 3:1-12).” (Jones & Woodbridge, 96)
- **Romans 4:17** “as it is written, ‘I have made you the father of many nations’—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and **calls into existence the things that do not exist.**” This passage is often used to explain that Christians have “creative power” as “little gods” with their “faith-filled” words. The context of the passage shows that it is God who “calls into existence the things that do not exist” and that it is not a power that has been given to people. Unfortunately prosperity preachers use this passage to encourage people to pray self-focused prayers.
- **James 4:2** “**You do not have, because you do not ask.**” – “Prosperity gospel preachers often note that we ‘have not because we ask not’ (see James 4:2). They encourage believers to pray for personal success in all areas of life. ...but the prosperity gospel’s overemphasis on people turns prayer into a tool that believers can use to obtain their desires from God. Within prosperity theology, people - rather than God – become the focal point of prayer. Curiously prosperity gospel preachers often ignore the second half of James’ teaching on prayer, which reads, ‘You ask and do not receive, because

you ask wrongly, to spend it on your own passions.' (James 4:3). God does not answer selfish requests that do not honor His name." (Jones and Woodbridge, 96-97)

- **Philippians 4:6** "do not be anxious about anything, but **in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.**" We are called to make all of our requests known to God...but these are requests, not demands, not "claimed promises," and not "declarations." The problem is that the "prosperity gospel focuses so much on people's desires that it can lead us to pray selfish, shallow, superficial prayers that do not bring God glory ...when coupled with the prosperity doctrine of faith, the teaching about prayer encourages people to try manipulating God to get what they want – indeed a futile task. This is far removed from praying to God to see His will accomplished." (Jones and Woodbridge, 99).

Many more Scriptures are twisted for the sake of health and wealth. Here is a great resource to understanding more: [www.watchman.org/articles/other-religious-topics/how-the-health-and-wealth-gospel-twists-scripture/](http://www.watchman.org/articles/other-religious-topics/how-the-health-and-wealth-gospel-twists-scripture/)

**Who are people associated with the Word of Faith movement?** Some of the most commonly known Word of Faith movement and prosperity gospel leaders are: Joel Osteen, Creflo Dollar, Kenneth Copeland, TD Jakes, Joyce Meyer, Joseph Prince, Kenneth Hagin, & many more. Some may deny their connections to WOF & the PG, but their teachings demonstrate their connection and justify such labeling.

**What is "positive profession," "name-it claim-it," and declarative/claiming prayers and why is it a problem?** Positive thinking/profession/confession was popularized by Norman Vincent Peale in 1952 through his book *The Power of Positive Thinking* (publisher of *Guideposts* and an endorser of many New Age, Mormon, and Occultic teachings, writers, and leaders). Some of the leading teachers and authors on the subject are: Joel Osteen (*I Declare: 31 Promises to Speak Over Your Life, Your Best Life Now, Become a Better You*), Joyce Meyer (*Power Thoughts, Change Your Words, Change Your Life, The Power of Being Positive*). A modern day summary of the "positive confession" movement is "the belief that if a believer speaks 'spiritual' or 'faith-filled' words then he can have what he says (Watchman.org on "Positive Confession"). A good Christian response is found in understanding that truth is the focus and sometimes it is negatively focused (confronting us in our sin, putting off our old self, negative confessions in the Psalms) and at other times positively focused (practicing righteousness, putting on our old self). Positive confessions often devolve into declaring/claiming/telling God what to do instead of saying "thy will be done" (Matthew 6:10, 26:42) and asking "according to His will" (1 John 5:14).

<http://www.gotquestions.org/power-positive-thinking.html>

<http://www.gotquestions.org/positive-confession.html>

<http://www.watchman.org/articles/other-religious-topics/positive-confession/>

<http://www.watchman.org/articles/other-religious-topics/norman-vincent-peale/>

**Why are the "prayer rebukes" of Satan and his demons a problem? Why is this connected with false teachers?** Prayer rebukes can be best described by those who practice naming particular spirits/demons (demon of falsehood, spirit of adultery, etc.) or speak towards the demonic ('I rebuke you' or 'I bind you'). This problem is scripturally seen in Jude 8-10 and 2 Peter 2:10-12.

**Is it possible for false teachers to turn to truth and become true teachers?** Yes, until we die, it is possible for anyone who is separated from God to turn to Him in salvation. Pray for their repentance and turning to the true Gospel of Christ.

**If I have been following a false teacher, should I be embarrassed or ashamed? What does God want me to do in response to realizing that I was following a false teacher?** If you find that you have been following a bad or false teacher, repent of believing the lies that you heard/read and put on God's truths. If you have led or encouraged others towards those teachings/teachers, guide them into the truth.

**Why did you pick *Heaven is for Real* and *Jesus Calling* as examples of false prophecies?** These are highly influential and popular titles that many Christians do not realize are false claims of prophecy.

**Why is *Heaven is for Real* by Colton, Todd, & Sonja Burpo an example of a false prophecy?** The authors claim that Colton went to heaven and that what is shared within the book is a description of heaven. Since this is claimed to be a divine experience with God the Father, Son, & Spirit, it must be 100% accurate and consistent with what is already presented in Scripture about heaven (i.e. Isaiah 6, Revelation). Here are some errors within the books that demonstrate inconsistencies with Scripture, thus making *Heaven is for Real* an example of false prophecy and its authors false prophets: Jesus on a rainbow horse (p.63, vs. white horse in Rev 6 & 19), people with wings (p.72, 87, 121 vs. no biblical description that matches, only seraphim and cherubim are described with wings), Colton deceived by dad (p.87 vs. Deut 18:22), Gabriel described sitting next to God's throne (p.101 vs. never being described in the Scriptures), angels with swords to "keep Satan out of heaven" (p. 133 vs. Job 1 & 2 – Satan's access to heaven, Jude 9 – Satan confronted by Michael with "the Lord rebuke you" and not a sword, 1 Chronicles 21 & Numbers 22 showing angels using swords vs. people not Satan), no bodies in Hell (p.136 vs. Matt 10:28, John 5:29, Luke 16, Daniel 12:2, Mark 9:43-48, Rev 20:13).

**Why is *Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young an example of a false prophecy?** Sarah Young claims in her introduction to have had a personal revelation with Jesus on multiple occasions (ix-xv). She states that the devotionals within her book have been directly given to her by God. Even though she claims her writings to not be on the same level of Scripture, she simultaneously claims her book to be divine revelation with God, making it necessary for her writings to be 100% accurate (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). She says "I have continued to receive personal messages from God as I meditate on Him...so I want to share some of the messages I have received." (xiii-xiv). She places her experiences and messages ahead of Scripture, weaving Scripture into her devotions as an almost afterthought. Her writings present an inaccurate and shallow view of Jesus, that is therapeutically focused on peace and comfort and ignores Christ's commands towards obedience (descriptive rather than prescriptive). Her theology is also wrongly influenced by Keswick piety (higher/victorious life, second blessing) through Andrew Murray's *The Secret of the Abiding Presence* (xi).

**Why did you pick the Word of Faith movement and "prosperity gospel" as false teachings to highlight?** Although many Christian cults could have been highlighted for their false teachings, the Word of Faith movement and "prosperity gospel" is a problem within my church congregation and friends. As a loving friend and pastor, it is my responsibility to rebuke false teachings in order to shepherd my flock and lead friends away from dangerous teachings.

**Why are you so concerned with TBN (the Trinity Broadcasting Network)?** Although TBN is a Christian station seeking to reach the world with the gospel, its messages are not always consistent. On one given Sunday (12/9/13) there were at least four faithful sermon broadcasts on TBN (James Merritt, Ed Young Sr., Adrian Rogers, Michael Youssef), but there were many more heretical, unfaithful broadcasts (Joel Osteen, Creflo Dollar, Kenneth Copeland, TD Jakes, Joyce Meyer, Joseph Prince, Kenneth Hagin, & many more...). The vast majority of broadcasts were from the Word of Faith movement. My concern is that a Christian may tune in to a faithful sermon and then continue to watch while unfaithful messengers "teach a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Timothy 6:3).

**Why did you pick Joel Osteen and Joyce Meyer as false teachers to highlight?** Joel Osteen and Joyce Meyer are two of the more influential speakers and authors among my church congregation and represent a spectrum of the Word of Faith movement (little Scripture used to no Scripture used) that helps warn us about the spectrum of heresies.

**Why do you state that Joel Osteen is a false teacher?** Mr. Osteen is an entertaining and encouraging speaker but fails to share the Gospel completely and uses Scripture out of context. Mr. Osteen makes these errors: (1) The Bible is about me and my glory rather than God's glory (2) Minimizes and ignores sin, thus failing to present the Gospel (3) Disregards a biblical understanding of suffering (4) Places the object of faith on oneself (5) Makes salvation more about my life now than an eternity with Christ (6) Consistently uses Scripture out of context (7) Ongoing association and endorsement of other Word of Faith leaders (8) Misrepresents what "need" is, characterizes it being okay to want more (9) He ignores a biblical understanding of suffering, that sometimes such suffering is God's will (10) Many of his teachings follow the Word of Faith and "prosperity gospel" misunderstandings of who God is and what salvation is ultimately all about.

- "When you say of the Lord you are healthy, you are whole, you are free, you are blessed, you are prosperous – when you say it, God has promised He will do it. ...If you are not sharing in His favor, you might want to watch your words. Here's the key: If you don't unleash your words in the right direction, if you don't call in favor, you will not experience those blessings. Nothing happens unless we speak. Release your faith with your words." (*It's Your Time*, 121-23.)
- "Our thoughts have tremendous power. Remember, we draw into our lives that which we constantly think about. If we're always dwelling on the negative, we will attract negative people, experiences, and attitudes." (*Your Best Life Now*, 109)
- "Our words have tremendous power, and whether we want to or not, we will give life to what we're saying, either good or bad... Words are similar to seeds, by speaking them aloud, they are planted in our subconscious minds, and they take on a life of their own." (*Your Best Life Now*, 122)
- "I've come to expect to be treated differently. I've learned to expect people to want to help me. My attitude is this: I'm a child of the Most High God. My Father created the whole universe. He has crowned me with favor; therefore, I can expect preferential treatment. I can expect people to go out of their way to want to help me." (*Your Best Life Now*, 38-39).
- "there is a miracle in your mouth. If you want to change your world, start by changing your words...If you'll learn how to speak the right words and keep the right attitude, God will turn that situation around." (*Your Best Life Now*, 125)
- "Everything I put my hands to prospers and succeeds! Friend, when you make those kinds of bold declarations, all heaven comes to attention to back up God's Word." (*Your Best Life Now*, 130)
- "with our words, we can prophesy our own future" (*Your Best Life Now*, 114)
- "God has breathed His life into you. He planned seeds of greatness in you. You have everything you need to fulfill your God-given destiny....It's all in you. You are full of potential. But you have to do your part and start tapping into it...You have the seed of Almighty God on the inside of you...We have to believe that we have what it takes." (*Becoming A Better You*, p.5)
- "We have to conceive it on the inside before we're ever going to receive it on the outside. If you don't think you can have something good, then you never will." (*Your Best Life Now*, p. 3)
- "I can guarantee you that your difficult situation will never improve as long as you stay in a negative frame of mind. But if you'll develop an attitude of faith and expect events to change positively, then at the right time, that situation will turn around." (*Your Best Life Now*, p. 16)



- “God wants to increase you financially, by giving you promotions, fresh ideas, and creativity.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.5)
- “God wants you to live an overcoming life of victory. He doesn't want you to barely get by. He's called *El Shaddai*, 'the God of more than enough.' He's not 'El Cheapo,' the God of barely enough!” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.33)
- “No, God wants to give you your own house. God has a big dream for your life.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.35)
- “God wants to make your life easier. He wants to assist you, to promote you, to give you advantages.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.38)
- “You don't have to dwell on every thought that comes to your mind. The first thing you need to do is ascertain where that thought is coming from. Is that thought from God, is it your own thought, or is it a destructive thought from the enemy? How can you tell? Easy. If it's a negative thought, it's from the enemy.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.109)
- “Forgive the people who did you wrong. Forgive yourself for the mistakes you have made. You may even need to forgive God.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.144).
- “I am blessed; I am prosperous; I am healthy; I am continually growing wiser.” (*Become a Better You*, 131)
- Beginning of messages, claiming his messages are rooted in Scripture: “This is my Bible. I am what it says I am, I have what it says I have, I can do what it says I can do. Today I'll be taught the Word of God. I boldly confess my mind is alert, my heart is receptive, I will never be the same, in Jesus name.” (Sermon online, December 1, 2013)
- Typical “Gospel presentation”: “We never like to close our broadcast without giving you an opportunity to make Jesus the Lord of your life. Would you pray with me? Just say, 'Lord Jesus, I repent of my sins, come into my heart, I make you my Lord and Savior.’” (Sermon online, December 1, 2013)

**Why do you state that Joyce Meyer is a false teacher?** Mrs. Meyer is an articulate speaker with a great knowledge of the Bible. My concerns with Mrs. Meyer that make me warn others that she is a false teacher are: (1) Claims of personal revelation from God and angels that she shares verbatim her audience (2) Years of financial improprieties and greed within her ministry organization (3) Failing to distance or deny her association with the Word of Faith movement and “prosperity gospel” (4) Continued emphasis on God's blessings through health, wealth, and prosperity instead of presenting a biblical understanding and balance (5) Ongoing misunderstanding on the essence of faith through the “power” of words (6) Improper descriptions and actions towards the demonic (naming of spirits and rebuking) (7) Ongoing association and endorsement of other Word of Faith leaders (8) Misrepresents what “need” is, characterizes it being okay to want “as much as I can handle properly” (Power Thoughts message, part 4) (9) She ignores a biblical understanding of suffering, that sometimes such suffering is God's will (10) Many of her teachings follow the Word of Faith and “prosperity gospel” misunderstandings of who God is and what salvation is ultimately all about (see <http://carm.org/joyce-meyer> )

- “I don't want to spend my whole life talking about the promised land without ever getting there. I want to live in it”(Joyce Meyer, “What Does Your Future Hold” May 21, 2004)
- “Words are containers for power” (*The Name, The Word, The Blood*, p. 37)
- “I prosper in everything I put my hand to. I have prosperity in all areas of my life – spiritually, financially, mentally, and socially. I take good care of my body. I eat right, I look good, I feel good, and I weigh what God wants me to weigh. Pain cannot successfully come against my body because Jesus bore all my pain. I lay hands on the sick and they recover. I receive speaking engagements in

person, by phone, and/or by mail every day. I walk in the spirit all of the time.” (Joyce Meyer, “List of Confessions”)

- “If you stay in your faith, you are going to get paid. I am now living in my reward.” (Jones and Woodbridge, 67)
- “The key to partaking of the life and healing energy in the Word is feeding on it until it penetrates your spirit where it deposits that life and energy.” (Joyce Meyer, “Healing Scriptures”)
- “‘I will’ is the strongest assertion that can be made in the English language. God is speaking to me now saying ‘I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.’ God is watching over this Word, performing it in me now. He is taking sickness away from the midst of me. Good-bye, sickness! The Lord is taking you away from the midst of me. Thank you, Father, for taking sickness away from me. I thank You for doing what You said...I’m abiding under the shadow of Jehovah-Rapha, the Lord that healeth me. No plague shall come nigh my dwelling or my body. I resist sickness and disease. I refuse to accept it! It’s not mine! I refuse to be sick in Jesus’ Name. Sickness cannot trespass in my body. Sickness, (name it), you can’t come nigh my dwelling. I refuse you! I resist you!” (Joyce Meyer, “Healing Scriptures”)
- “By His stripes I was healed. Healing belongs to me. ...I’ve already got healing, because by His stripes I was healed!” (Joyce Meyer, “Healing Scriptures”)
- “Will help you to take inventory of what you’ve been saying and begin speaking faith filled words that will bring to pass God’s good plan for your life” (May 14, 2000 LeSea broadcasting)
- “But you cannot throw out positive confession, and you cannot throw out all the faith teachers, and you cannot throw out positive thinking. And you cannot get rid of those kinds of things because they’re in the Bible from one end of it to the other” (Joyce Meyer, PFO Quarterly Journal, April-June 2002, p. 6., Witchcraft and Related Spirits, pt. 1, sides 1 and 2).
- “Romans 4:17 says God gives life to the dead and speaks of the nonexistent things as if they already existed. He created the world with faith-filled words (see Genesis 1). We are created in His image, and we can also call things that are not as though they are. We can speak positive thoughts about ourselves into the atmosphere and thereby ‘prophesy our future.’” (Joyce Meyer, “Your Mouth is a Weapon,” Life in the Word March 1997, p. 4.)
- “You got a storage bin, a storage locker in heaven that has a lot of stuff in it that needs to be claimed.” (Joyce Meyer, “What Does Your Future Hold” May 21, 2004)
- “Even though she had had the problem for twelve years, and the crowds looked impossible to penetrate, she pressed through and received her miracle. Her faith was released through her words. What a powerful example for you and me” (Joyce Meyer, Enjoying Everyday Life Magazine, “Crossing Over to the Other Side,” May 2004).
- “Sowing and reaping is a spiritual law...Sow generously and you will reap generously...We need to claim as much of that inheritance as we possibly can...One of the things you can do right now is speak positive things about your future right now” (Joyce Meyer, “What Does Your Future Hold” May 21, 2004).
- “Remember whatever you are willing to do for God, God is willing to do for you” (week of Sept.20-26, 2005 LeSea broadcasting)
- “Now spirits don’t have bodies, so we can’t see them. Okay? There probably is, I believe there is, and I certainly hope there is several angels up here this morning that are preaching with me. I believe that right before I speak some anointed statement to you, that one of them bends over and says in my ear what I’m supposed to say to you.” Joyce Meyer (“Witchcraft & Related Spirits” (Part 1) - 2 A-27 Audiotape)

- “There is no hope of anyone going to heaven unless they believe this truth I am presenting. You cannot go to heaven unless you believe with all your heart that Jesus took your place in hell” (Joyce Meyers, *The Most Important Decision You Will Ever Make* 1991).
- “We laid hands on the check and prayed. I went and got all of our checkbooks and my pocketbook and Dave got his wallet and we laid hands on them and put the blood on them, asking God to protect our money, to cause it to multiply and to see to it that Satan could not steal any of it from us” (p.111 *The Name, The Word, The Blood*).

**I still don't believe \_\_\_\_\_ is a false prophet/teacher, so how does this message matter for me? What should I do next?** If you haven't been convinced from this outline, you need to be very concerned about your understanding of God, the Gospel, and His truths. Invest some time in reading the Scriptures, the included *links*, and *Health, Wealth, and Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* to make sure you understand the teachings of Scripture. Even if you haven't become convinced that one of the individuals mentioned is a false teacher, you need to begin to listen very closely to what you hear and read in the future. You need to make sure that who you listen to is trustworthy and is teaching the whole counsel of God accurately.