

# GRACE ABUSE: DEVALUATION

By David Lee Burris

## The Honor-Shame Societal Setting of Reciprocity Obligations:

**Patronage & Friendship.** “Numerous examples of **brokerage** can be found in the letters of Cicero, Pliny the Younger and Fronto, correspondence providing windows into public policy from the late republic through the second century of the empire. Pliny’s letters to the emperor Trajan (dating from A.D. 111–113, the time during which Pliny was governor of Bithynia) contain attempts by Pliny to procure imperial favors for his own friends and clients. In one such letter (*Ep.* 10.4), Pliny introduces a client of his, named Voconius Romanus, to Trajan with a view to getting Voconius a senatorial appointment. He addresses Trajan clearly as a client addressing his patron and proceeds to ask a favor for Voconius. Pliny offers his own character as a guarantee of his client’s character, and Trajan’s “favorable judgement” of Pliny (not Voconius, whom he does not know) would become the basis for Trajan’s granting of this favor. Should the favor be granted by the emperor, Voconius would be indebted not only to Trajan but also to Pliny, who will, in turn, be indebted further to Trajan.<sup>6</sup> The broker, or mediator, at the same time incurs a debt and increases his own honor through the indebtedness of his client. Brokerage—the gift of access to another, often greater patron—was in itself a highly valued benefit. Without such connections the client would never have had access to what he desired or needed. This is especially apparent in the case of Pliny’s physical therapist, Arpocras, who gains both Roman and Alexandrian citizenship by means of Pliny, who petitions Trajan on his behalf (*Ep.* 10.5–7, 10). Pliny gives this local physician access to the emperor, the fount of patronage, which he would never have enjoyed otherwise. Brokerage could even intervene in the judicial process. Both Cicero<sup>7</sup> and Marcus Aurelius (*Ad M. Caes.* 3.2) use their connections of friendship with a judge to secure favorable outcomes for their clients, on whose behalf they write.

## The Social Context of Grace

Today, *grace* is primarily a religious word, heard only in churches and Christian circles. It has progressed through millennia of theological reflection, developments and accretions (witness the multiplication of terms like “justifying grace,” “sanctifying grace” and “prevenient grace” in Christian theology, systematizing the order of salvation). For the actual writers and readers of the New Testament, however, *grace* was not primarily a religious, as opposed to a secular, word. Rather, it was used to speak of reciprocity among human beings and between mortals and God (or, in pagan literature, the gods). This single word encapsulated the entire ethos of the relationships we have been describing.

First, *grace* was used to refer to the willingness of a patron to grant some benefit to another person or to a group. In this sense, it means “favor,” in the sense of “favorable disposition.” In Aristotle’s words (*Rhetoric* 2.7.1 [1385a16–20]), “Grace [*charis*] may be defined as helpfulness toward someone in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper himself [or herself], but for that of the person helped.” In this sense, the word highlights the generosity and disposition of the patron, benefactor or giver. The same word carries a second sense, often being used to denote the gift itself, that is, the result of the giver’s beneficent feelings. Many honorary inscriptions mention the graces (*charitas*) of the benefactor as the cause for conferring public praise, emphasizing the real and received products of the benefactor’s goodwill toward a city or group.

Finally, *grace* can be used to speak of the response to a benefactor and his or her gifts, namely, “**gratitude.**” Demosthenes provides a helpful window into this aspect in his *De Corona* as he chides his audience for not responding honorably to those who have helped them in the past: “But you are so ungrateful (*acharistos*) and wicked by nature that, having been made free out of slavery and wealthy out of poverty by these people, you do not show gratitude (*charin echeis*) toward them but rather enriched yourself by taking action against them” (*De Corona* 131). *Grace* thus has very specific meanings for the authors and readers of the New Testament, meanings derived primarily from the use of the word in the context of the giving of benefits and the requiting of favors. The fact that one and the same word can be used to speak of a beneficent act and the response to a beneficent act suggests implicitly what many moralists from the Greek and Roman cultures stated explicitly: grace must be met with grace; favor must always give birth to favor; gift must always be met with gratitude.

## Responding with Grace

As we have already seen in Seneca’s allegory of the three Graces, an act of favor must give rise to a response of gratitude—grace *must* answer grace, or else something beautiful will be defaced and turned into something ugly. According to Cicero, while initiating a gift was a matter of choice, gratitude was not optional for honorable people, but rather an absolute duty (*De Offic.* 1.47–48). Receiving a favor or kindness meant incurring very directly a debt or obligation to respond gratefully, a debt on which one could not default.<sup>36</sup> Seneca stresses the simultaneity of receiving a gift and an obligation: “The person who intends to be grateful, even while she or he is receiving, should turn his or her thoughts to returning the favor” (*Ben.* 2.25.3). Indeed, the virtuous person could seek to compete with the giver in terms of kindnesses and favor, trying not merely to return the favor but to return it with interest like the fruitful soil that bears crops far more abundant than the seeds that were scattered on it.<sup>37</sup>

Ingratitude is something to be avoided in itself because there is nothing that so effectually disrupts and destroys the harmony of the human race as this vice. For how else do we live in security if it is not that we help each other by an exchange of good offices? It is only through the interchange of benefits that life becomes in some measure equipped and fortified against sudden disasters. Take us singly, and what are we? The prey of all creatures. (*Ben.* 4.18.1, LCL)

Responding justly to one’s benefactors was a behavior enforced not by written laws but rather “by unwritten customs and universal practice,” with the result that a person known for gratitude would be considered praiseworthy and honorable by all, while the ingrate would be regarded as disgraceful. There was no law for the prosecution of the person who failed to requite a favor (with the interesting exception of classical Macedonia), but, Seneca affirmed, the punishment of shame and being hated by all good people would more than make up for the lack of official sanctions.<sup>42</sup> **Neglecting to return a kindness, forgetfulness of kindnesses already received in the past, and, most horrendous of all, repaying favor with insult or injury—these were courses of action to be avoided by an honorable person at all costs. Rather, gifts were always to be remembered, commemorated first of all in the shrine of one’s own mind, and always to be requited with gratitude. The social sanctions of honor and shame, therefore, were important bulwarks for the virtue of gratitude and exerted considerable pressure in this direction.** As we consider gratitude, then, we are presented with something of a paradox. Just as the favor was freely bestowed, so the response must be free and uncoerced. Nonetheless, that response is at the same time necessary and unavoidable for an honorable person who wishes to be known as such (and hence the recipient of favor in the future). Gratitude is never a formal obligation. There is no advance calculation of or agreed on return for the gift given. Nevertheless, the recipient of a favor knows that he or she stands under the necessity of returning favor when favor has been received. The element of exchange must settle into the background, being dominated instead by a sense of mutual favor, of mutual goodwill and generosity.<sup>48</sup>

## Manifestations of Gratitude

**“Returning a favor”** could take on many forms, depending on the nature of the gift and the relative economic and political clout of the parties concerned. Cities or associations would show their gratitude for public benefactions by providing for the public recognition (honoring and increasing the fame) of the giver and often memorializing the gift and the honors conferred by means of a public inscription or, in exceptional cases, a statue of the giver or other monument.

A second component of gratitude that comes to expression in relationships of personal patronage or friendship is **loyalty to the giver**, that is, showing gratitude and owning one’s association with the giver even when fortunes turn, and it becomes costly. Thus Seneca writes about gratitude that “if you wish to make a return for a favor, you must be willing to go into exile, or to pour forth your blood, or to undergo poverty, or,...even to let your very innocence be stained and exposed to shameful slanders” (*Ep. Mor.* 81.27). Wallace-Hadrill writes that despite the fact that, in theory, clients were expected to remain loyal to their patrons, in practice, if a patron fell into political trouble or if his or her fortunes began to wane, the patron’s entourage of clients would evaporate.<sup>51</sup> Such practice, however, was contrary to *the ideal of gratitude, according to which a person would stand by (or under) the person’s patron and continue to live gratefully even if it cost the individual the future favors of others, or brought him or her into dangerous places and worked contrary to self-interest. The person who disowned or dissociated himself or herself from a patron because of self-interest was an ingrate.*

**The principal of loyalty meant that clients or friends would have to take care not to become entangled in webs of crossed loyalties. Although a person could have multiple patrons, to have as patrons two people who were enemies or rivals of one another would place one in a dangerous position, since ultimately the client would have to prove loyal and grateful to one but disloyal and ungrateful to the other. “No one can serve two masters” honorably in the context of these masters being at odds with one another, but if the masters are “friends” or bound to each other by some other means, the client should be safe in receiving favors from both.**

## The Dance of Grace

Such mutually contradictory rules (forgetting and remembering, being silent and bearing witness, and the like) are constructed so as to keep the giver’s mind wholly on what is noble about patronage (generosity, acting in the interest of others) and the recipient’s mind wholly on what is noble for the client (namely making a full and rich return of gratitude for favors conferred). They are devised in order to sustain both parties’ commitment to acting nobly within the system of reciprocity. The ultimate goal for these ancient ethicists, after all, was not perfect systematization but virtuous conduct. Grace, then, held two parties together in a bond of reciprocal exchanges, a bond in which each party committed to provide what he or she (or they) could to serve the needs or desires of the other. Though often profitably compared to a dance that had to be kept “grace-full” in a circle of giving and receiving, these relationships were far more than ornamental or recreational (as dances are). They formed the bedrock of society, a person’s principal assurance of aid and support in an uncertain and insecure world.”<sup>1</sup> (Source)

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<sup>1</sup> deSilva, D. A. (2000). [\*Honor, patronage, kinship & purity: unlocking New Testament culture\*](#) (pp. 94–119). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

## Dietrich Bonhoeffer



“Cheap grace means grace sold on the market like cheapjacks' wares. The sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, and the consolations of religion are thrown away at cut prices. Grace is represented as the Church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits. Grace without price; grace without cost! The essence of grace, we suppose, is that the account has been paid in advance; and, because it has been paid, everything can be had for nothing. Since the cost was infinite, the possibilities of using and spending it are infinite. What would grace be if it were not cheap?...

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.

Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. **Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: "ye were bought at a price," and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God."**

– Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship

## Cheap grace – What is it?

The phrase "cheap grace" is often associated with German theologian and minister Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *The Cost of Discipleship*. In his book, published in 1937, he said that cheap grace was "the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline. Communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ."

As defined by Bonhoeffer, cheap grace is an approach to Christianity that only emphasizes the good or easy parts without telling the truth regarding the difficult aspects of it. To leave out the more difficult aspects of repentance, church discipline, confession, discipleship, the cross, or the full story of Christ's life offers an incomplete, "cheap" view of God's grace.

In contrast, grace is not cheap but is a priceless gift. God sent His one and only Son to die as a sacrifice for our sins. Jesus endured the pain and the shame of the cross to offer us salvation by grace through faith in Him ([Philippians 2:5-8](#); [Hebrews 12:1-2](#); [Ephesians 2:8-9](#)).

Further, though salvation is a free gift of grace, the Christian life includes times and aspects of costly sacrifice. Paul, James, Jude, and Peter referred to themselves in their letters as a "servant" or "slave" of Christ Jesus. Jesus even referred to those who lived for Him as people who would take up their cross daily and follow Him ([Luke 9:23](#)).

Much debate often arises between those who emphasize salvation by grace as a free gift and those who emphasize the actions of a changed life that should result from a person who has been changed by Christ. For example, in the past century a debate arose between two views representing these ideas known as Free Grace and Lordship Salvation.

The Free Grace position emphasizes all that is necessary for salvation is to receive Jesus as Savior ([John 1:12](#); [John 3:16](#); [Romans 10:9](#)). The Lordship Salvation view argues that a person must receive Jesus as Savior and Lord to truly be saved and that genuine life change must be exhibited as a result ([Luke 14:25-33](#); [Romans 5:20-21](#); [Ephesians 4:17-24](#); [James 2:14-26](#)).

A driving motivation in this debate has been the growth of what some have called "carnal Christians." These are people who consider themselves Christians yet show little or no difference in their lives than non-Christians. A Free Grace position would argue that many of these people are true believers who are living in sin while a Lordship Salvation view would argue these carnal Christians have never been saved at all.

In summary, the idea of "cheap grace" is one that was developed by Bonhoeffer and has had great influence within Christian thought over the past century. While the grace of God is a free gift available to all who will receive it, a disciple of Jesus Christ will also be willing to grow and endure hardship for the sake of the Gospel. Salvation is about transformation ([2 Cor. 5:17](#)) and new life in Christ ([John 10:10](#)). Our freedom came at great cost to Jesus ([1 Cor. 6:20](#); [7:23](#); [2 Cor. 5:21](#)). Grace is free, but it is not cheap.

*GOD'S  
GRACE IS  
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CHEAP!*

# Editorial: Grace: costly, free, but not cheap

**John M. Fowler**

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Grace is God's unmerited favor to sinners. With that as a working definition, I once tried to give a Bible study to a Hindu friend on the Christian doctrine of salvation by grace. But I didn't get too far. My friend had too many questions about this business called unmerited favor. He extended that kind of favor every day to a number of people: the beggar on the street did not deserve the favor of his generosity; the accountant who swindled a large sum of money from his business received an unmerited forgiveness that kept him from jail; his mother-in-law, grouchy and complaining all week, got a new sari for no particular reason. My friend's argument was simple: the beggar, the crook, and his mother-in-law did not deserve any favor from him, but he did show them unmerited favors. Was he practicing grace?

When we speak of divine grace, we are not talking of human goodness, and we are not talking of humanistic noble-mindedness. We are referring to God's basis of redemption of us sinners. As sinners we deserve death; God offers us life. We are separated; He offers us reconciliation. We are under judgment; He provides us freedom. We are prodigals in swineland; He brings us home. All for free. And the basis of God's redemptive initiative and operation is grace. When Paul says "The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men" (Titus 2:11),\* he is not referring to any ethereal or abstract quality of God, but to the dynamic, concrete, historic event of Jesus Christ more specifically, the act of Christ on the cross. God chose to deal with the problem of sin through the cross, and because of that **sovereign choice**, forgiveness and freedom from sin are possible only through the cross. Thus, grace is God's sovereign initiative and activity for the salvation of sinners who through (obedient) faith accept that provision of divine grace.

Paul devotes the entire Epistle of Romans to the singular theme that salvation is by God's grace, and not by human works. The apostle lays down the summary principle: "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace" (Rom 11:6). To the apostle, so far as salvation is concerned, grace and works are mutually exclusive principles.



## Free, but costly

But to speak of grace as free does not mean that it is not costly. It is free only so far as the recipient is concerned. To the Provider, the price was enormous. The cost is inestimable. God's choice of dealing with sin through the manifestation of His grace cost the life of His Son. Who can estimate the value of that act of divine love? Gethsemane and the cross, the dreadful wrath of God against sin witnessed there, show not only divine abhorrence of sin but also the divine cost to effect the plan of salvation. When Paul speaks of "God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself (2 Cor. 5:18), He is putting the Father and the Son together in the act of salvation, and shows that Both paid a great price for making divine-human reconciliation possible. Ephesians 1:7, 8 spells out clearly the price paid: "In him [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us." God and His grace, Christ and His blood, and our sins and our forgiveness are all brought together in this one beautiful passage to show that we have nothing to do or to add to what has already been done by God. Ours is only to respond in faith and let the blood of Jesus free us from our sins (Rev. 1:5).

## Free, but not cheap

Grace is free. Grace is costly. But grace is not cheap. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who ministered against formidable odds and bore witness to his faith at considerable cost, coined the term *cheap grace*. Coined during the tumultuous days of the Nazi era, in the face of a passive church that spoke of redemption but knew little of its meaning and its impact on daily life, cheap grace denotes not only corporate indifference to the demands of discipleship but also personal blindness and deafness to the call of Jesus to follow Him. **"Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."** <sup>1</sup>

Cheap grace has nothing to do with the call of Jesus. When Jesus calls a person, He offers him a cross to carry. To be a disciple is to be a follower, and being a follower of Jesus is no cheap trick.

To the Corinthians Paul twice wrote of the obligations of grace. First, he speaks of his own experience: "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them [the apostles], though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me" (1 Cor. 15:10). See how Paul acknowledges the supremacy of God's grace in his life? And immediately he adds that this grace was not given to him in vain. The Greek *eis kenon* literally translates "for emptiness." **That is to say, the Apostle Paul did not receive grace in order to lead a vain, empty life—but rather a life filled with the fruits of the Spirit, and even that not in his own strength but by the power of the indwelling grace. Similarly he pleads with the believers "not to accept the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. 6:1).**

The grace of God has not come to redeem us from one kind of emptiness to place us in another kind of emptiness. God's grace is His activity to reconcile us to Himself, to make us a part of the family of God. We come into that family, not because of any good works that we have done, but because we have accepted through (obedient) faith what God has done through the cross of Jesus. Having come into the family, we live in the family, bearing fruits of God's love through the power of His amazing grace.

- ministry journal

Grace has a popular acrostic:

Grace = **G**od's **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense.

## God's Grace Is Free But Not Cheap

By [Mike Riley](#)

Categories: [Church of Christ Bulletin Articles](#)

In [John 1:14-17](#), John records the following about our Lord:

*"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, 'This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me [ranks higher than I], for He was before me.' And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."*

The word "grace" simply means "unmerited favor" — [favor that one receives which is undeserved and unearned](#). The idea of grace being "free" means that it became available to us without cost to us ([Ephesians 2:8](#)).

However, it does not mean it was without cost at all, for **it cost God plenty** to offer it to us without charge ([John 3:16](#); [Romans 5:8](#); [1 John 4:9](#)). Grace is indeed priceless, but Someone else paid the price because we couldn't afford it.

### Grace is Costly Because it Calls Us To Follow Jesus

We are permitted the privilege of choosing the way of grace and become disciples of Jesus. To be a disciple means to follow after the Teacher. Of course, while we are given this opportunity by grace, we cannot follow through and take advantage of it without cost.

To follow Jesus, means to put His kingdom and righteousness first ([Matthew 6:33](#)). The cost of discipleship means that we must put other things second, third, etc. Another cost associated with discipleship is picking up and bearing a cross of self-denial ([Matthew 16:24](#)). We cannot be His disciple if we refuse to do this.

We cannot be Jesus' disciple if we insist on speaking bitterly against and reviling those who have reviled us. Now that is a heavy cost of discipleship because when someone speaks ill of us wouldn't we love to reply in kind?

But Peter states:

*"For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps ... who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2:21-23; cf. Isaiah 53:9).*

We need to understand that it is a privilege without cost to us to be able to become disciples of Christ. We do not deserve the opportunity of being called His people, but when we choose to walk after Him, there will be costs to faithful discipleship. For that reason, He told us to calculate the cost (cf. [Luke 14:25-30](#)).

## **Grace is Costly Because it Costs a Person His Life**

We immediately think of how Jesus gave His life for our sins so that grace could be freely offered by a righteous God to sinners. But to receive grace, we must be willing to give our lives to the Lord as well.

There is more than one way to "give one's life" for a cause. Not only can we give our lives by "dying" for a cause, we can also give our lives by "living" for a cause as well. If one truly follows Christ as His disciple, there will be a life given to Him. Jesus said:

*"For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds" (Matthew 16:25-27).*

God's grace means we are saved without regard to our deeds, because His grace is freely offered. However, Jesus says we must give our lives to Him, and this "giving" will effect the deeds we do, and how we are recompensed on that last day.

In [Romans 6:1-8](#), Paul likens one giving his or her life to the Lord as a death of one life and the beginning of a new life. The old person is figuratively crucified (the old way of sin is repented of) so that when one is raised up with Christ from *baptism* he or she might begin to walk "in newness of life" (cf. [Acts 8:36-39](#)).

But let's remember that not only is life given, but **life is also received**. Jesus calls it an "abundant life" ([John 10:10](#)). Everyone who gives, always receives much more ([Gal. 6:9](#); cf. [Proverbs 11:24](#)). This life is a gift in that it is offered to us freely, but we must be "in Christ" to receive it — "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life **in Christ Jesus** our Lord." ([Romans 6:23 ESV](#) — emphasis mine).

### **Grace is Costly Because It Condemns Sin**

Contrary to what some believe, grace does not make sinful acts not sinful. Grace is not a license to sin ([Romans 6:1](#)). We cannot sin under God's grace and be counted as righteous. Some apparently have the idea that God no longer views their sin to be sin because they are under grace. This is incorrect and not taught in Scripture ([Revelation 21:8](#); [Revelation 21:27](#); [Hebrews 10:26-31](#)).

Folks, grace justifies sinners — not their sins! Grace does not make lying, adultery, or greediness any less sinful. What it does freely offer is **conditional forgiveness**. All have sinned ([Romans 3:23](#)) and the wages of sin is death ([Romans 6:23](#)). While grace brings the potential for forgiveness to those under this sentence of death, **we must continue** in the grace of God ([Acts 13:43](#); cf. [Acts 14:22](#)), "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts" ([Titus 2:11-13](#)).

## Grace is Costly Because It Cost God The Life of His Son

Yes, grace is not cheap. In fact, we are told that the church was purchased with the blood of God's Son ([Acts 20:28](#)). And as a purchased [peculiar KJV] people ([1 Peter 2:9 ASV](#); cf. [Deuteronomy 14:2](#); [1 Chronicle 17:22](#); [Titus 2:14](#)), we are reminded to glorify God in our bodies because we **"have been bought with a price."** ([1 Corinthians 6:20 ESV](#)).

As recipients of God's grace, we do not deserve this most kind and merciful act.

*"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." ([Romans 5:8](#)).*

Who could ever claim "Jesus died for me because I am worth it." No, we are not worthy of His grace. That is why it is grace. However, we can walk in a manner worthy of our calling ([Ephesians 4:1](#)) and conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ ([Philippians 1:27](#)) and even partake of the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner ([1 Corinthians 11:27-29](#)) but we cannot be worthy of His sacrifice.

### Conclusion:

Grace is indeed free, **but it is not unconditional**. If it were, then everyone would be saved. But it is **conditioned upon our response to it**. In the Bible, our response to God's grace is called "faith" ([Romans 10:17](#)). This is why we are said to be "saved by grace through faith" ([Ephesians 2:8](#)).

Let us praise God each day for the gift of His wonderful grace, and let us properly respond to it by being **obedient to His will** ([Matthew 7:21](#); cf. [Luke 6:46](#); [James 1:22](#)).



# GRACE ABUSE: GRACE FOR SALE



## SONG LYRICS OF "GRACE FOR SALE"

We've got grace for sale

How the worm is turning turning

Lay you down to sleep

With wicked little stories

Count your missing sheep

Shed my skin, my fleece, my sin, my worms

They burrow up the line

Serpents in the branches, branching

Up those crooked vines

Vultures of a feather hatching

Circus lullabies

Carousels are ramping up to heaven

I raise my hell, my cane, my stakes, my snakes

Tongues, tongues

Slither in the mud

That's how a carnival grows, my son

We've got grace for cheap



We've got grace for cheap

Lest you end up bested, lost and torn to shreds, dissected

Tongues, tongues

Slither in the mud

Slither in the mud

That's how a carnival grows, my son

That's how a carnival grows

Fa la la, it's off to hell we go

Cross your heart and hope to die

It's off to hell we go

Fa la la, it's off to hell we go

Stick a needle in your eye

It's off to hell we go

Fa la la, it's off to hell we go

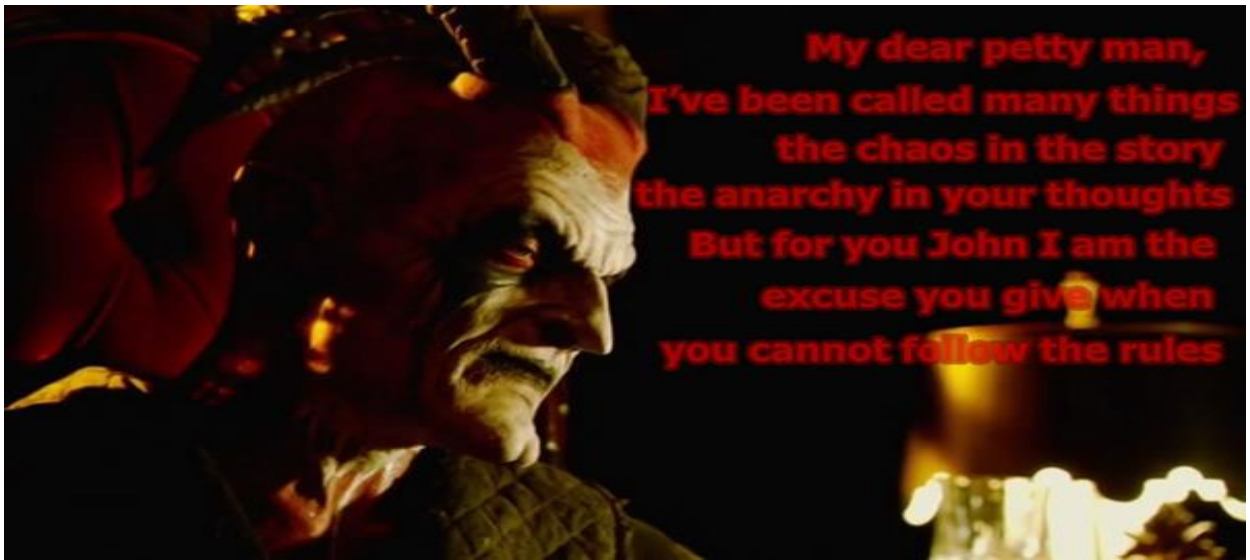
Cross your heart and hope to die

It's off to hell we go

Fa la la, it's off to hell we go

Stick a needle in your eye

It's off to hell we go











## WHAT IS HAPPENING WHEN PEOPLE ARE BEING ‘SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT TODAY’?

Since we can conclude it is not found in the Bible, there must be other factors at work. After 26 years of personally experiencing, or being a part of tens of thousands of “slayings”, I’ve come to find that five conclusions quantify what in the world is going on when people fall under this supposed power.

**I. People think they have to fall down** – Peer pressure at these sort of services is intense. Nobody wants to look bad or make the preacher look bad. It is widely believed that there is something wrong with you if you don’t “feel” God’s presence and have a manifestation of some sort, so peer pressure plays a huge factor in falling. Sadly, kids end up being the biggest loser in this forced behavior as they seek to please and soon are brainwashed into the system. In many cases, people see other people falling and just follow suit. Finally, it is common for seekers who come to these services to think they have to fall down in order to get the experience that the preacher is promising.

**II. People are told they are going to fall down** – The power of suggestion and hypnosis is real. Documentaries like “Miracles for Sale” have proven that the power of suggestion and hypnosis can be used to make complete strangers do whatever the hypnotist commands. This isn’t news to those with an understanding of psychology and social science but many Christians are still unaware that many charismatic extremists who slay people in the spirit are experts at hypnosis and manipulation. Three hours of sensual and soothing music, countless bursts of saying, “Jesus is here! He is going to touch you! You are going to feel something you’ve never felt before! Just receive it!”, gets people in the mood. Then, they are ripe for the picking. Hypnosis is also proven to put people in a trance-like state – something common at these services.

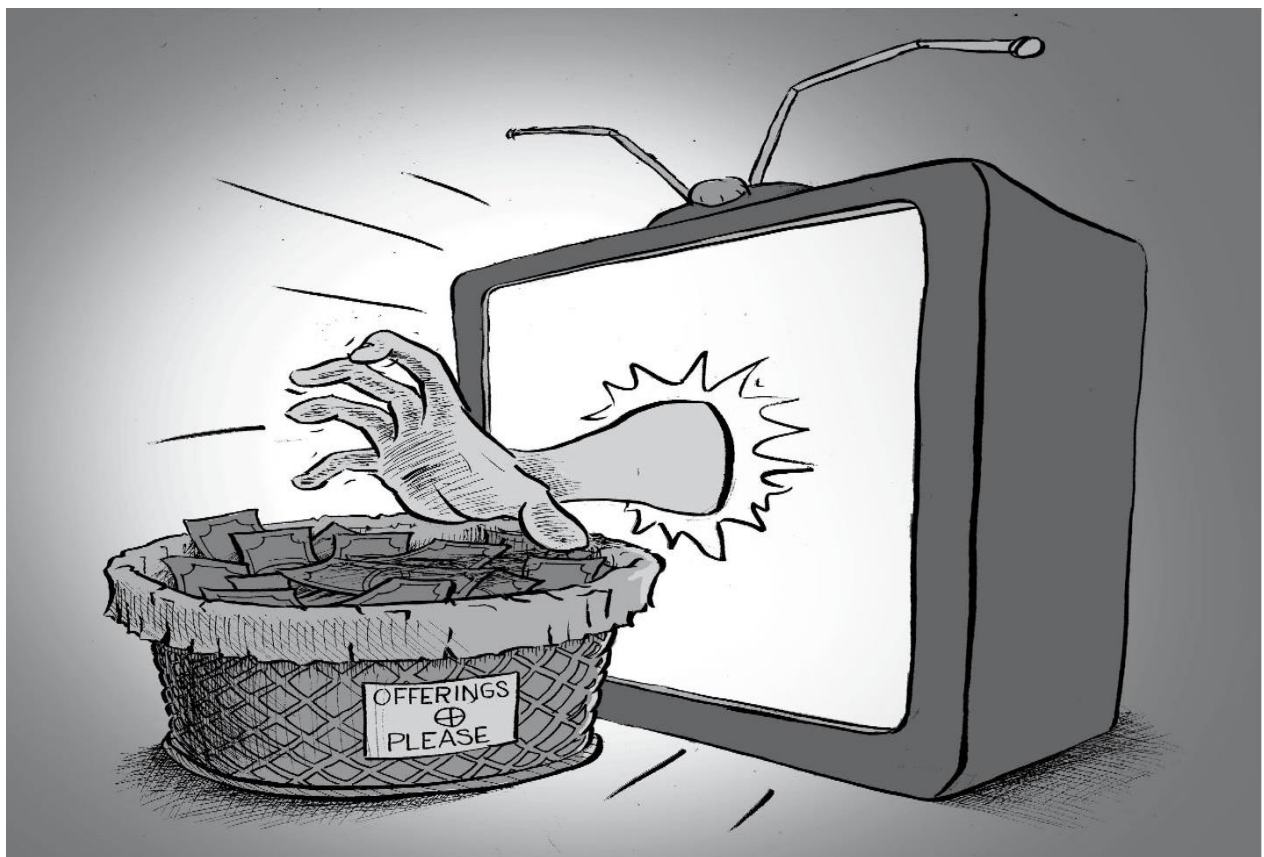
**III. People want to fall down** – Reverence is a big deal in Third Wave, N.A.R., and charismatic extremist circles. People are taught to honor leaders in a god-like fashion because they are literally on His level. Many former followers in these movements have admitted that they wanted a deeper connection with God, and wanted the anointing that was being promised by the leader – so they chose to fall in hopes of having a spiritual experience. This often leads to the weeping, praying, and emotional responses seen after the pastor lays his hands on them.

**IV. People are faking it** – I’ve personally interacted with friends, family, and followers who have faked it. By the grace of God, people who don’t grow up in charismatic chaos have no idea this happens but when you grow up with a special anointing service every week and it lasts 4 hours a shot – you start falling just to get it over with. I once asked someone close to me why they threw themselves back and acted so crazy on the platform to which he claimed, “Come on man, we gotta make him look good and get this over with.” Make no mistake about it, people fake it. - MYTHBUSTERS

# ***FAITH HEALING: HOW'S IT WORK?***



**STEP ONE:** The trained faith healer locates your God Gland. Once pressed, the God Gland transmits your request for supernatural medical attention.





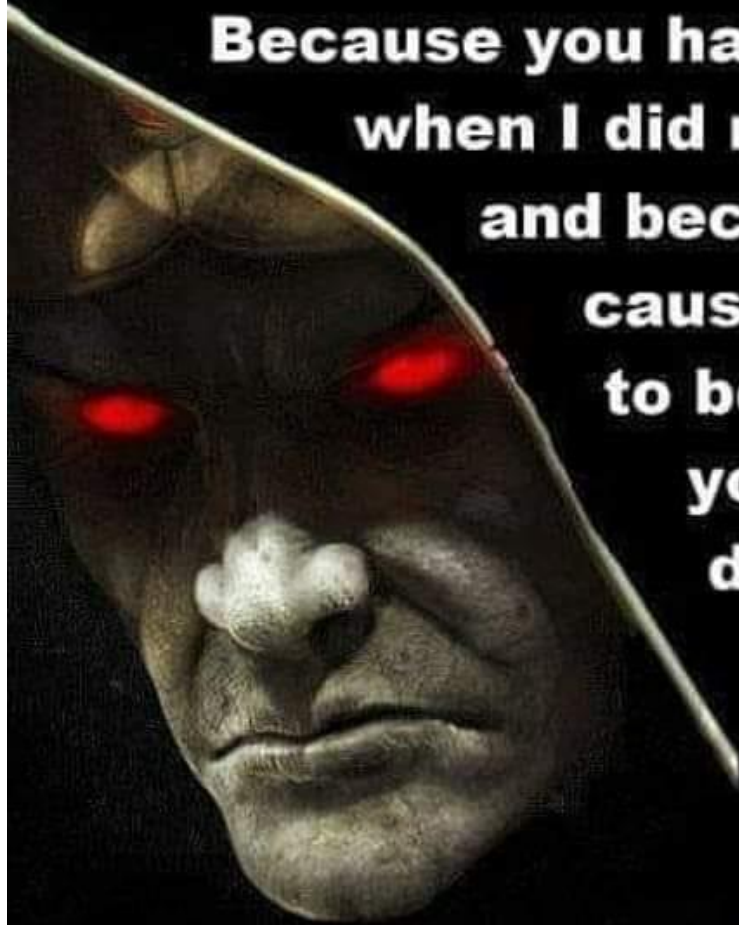


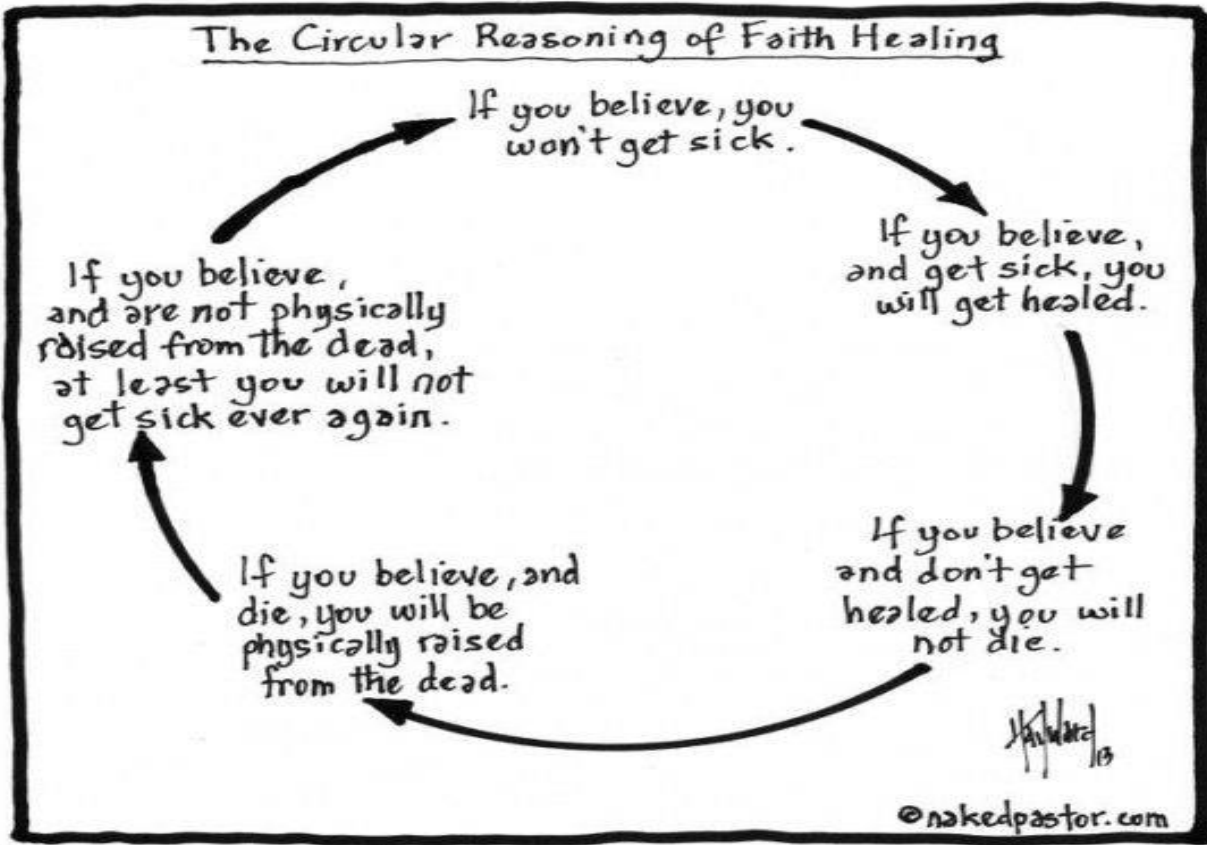


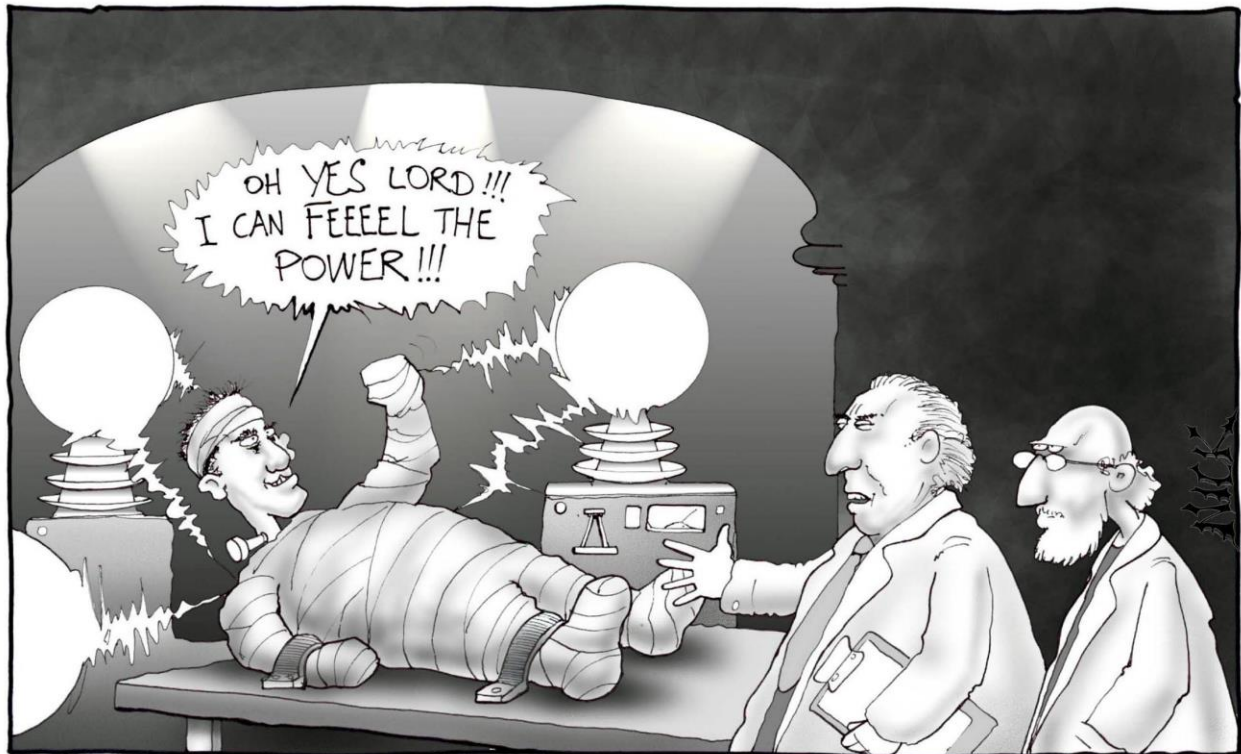
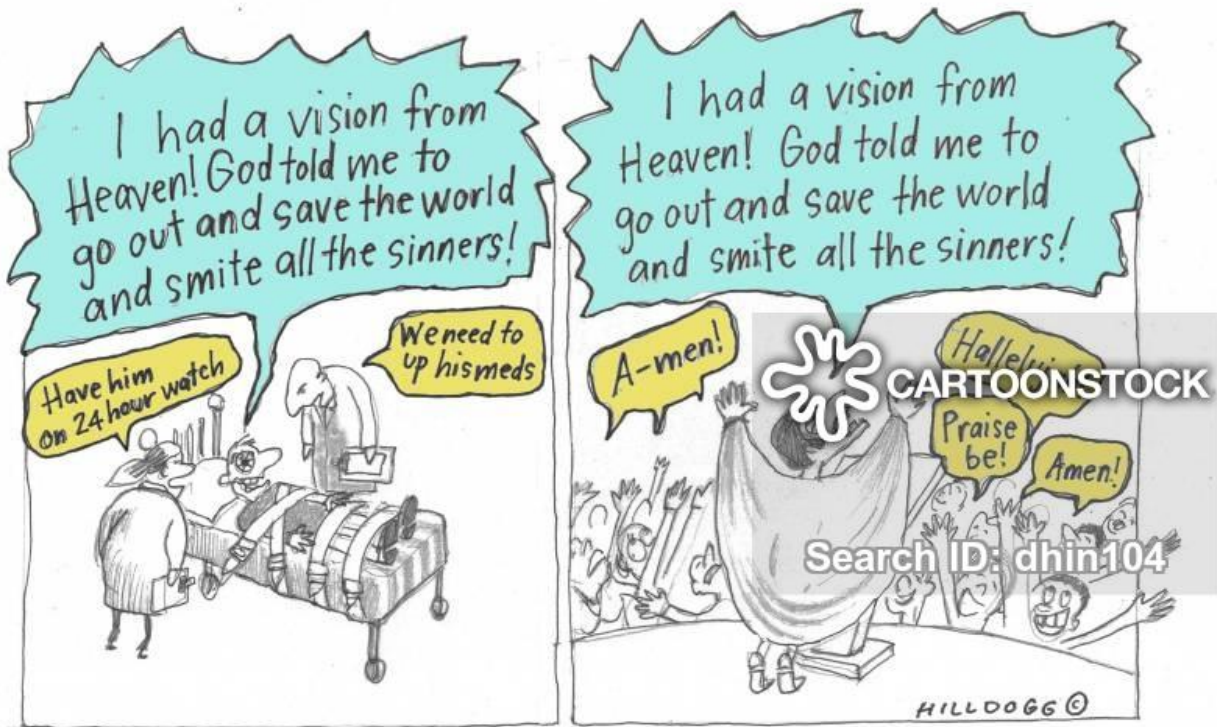
# **FALSE PROPHETS**

**Because you have prophesied  
when I did not send you,  
and because you  
caused my people  
to believe in a lie,  
you and your  
descendents  
will be  
punished.  
Jeremiah 29**

**Causing good people to  
believe lies.**

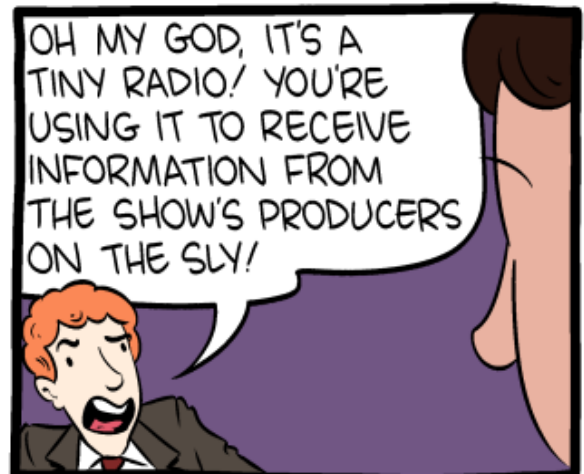






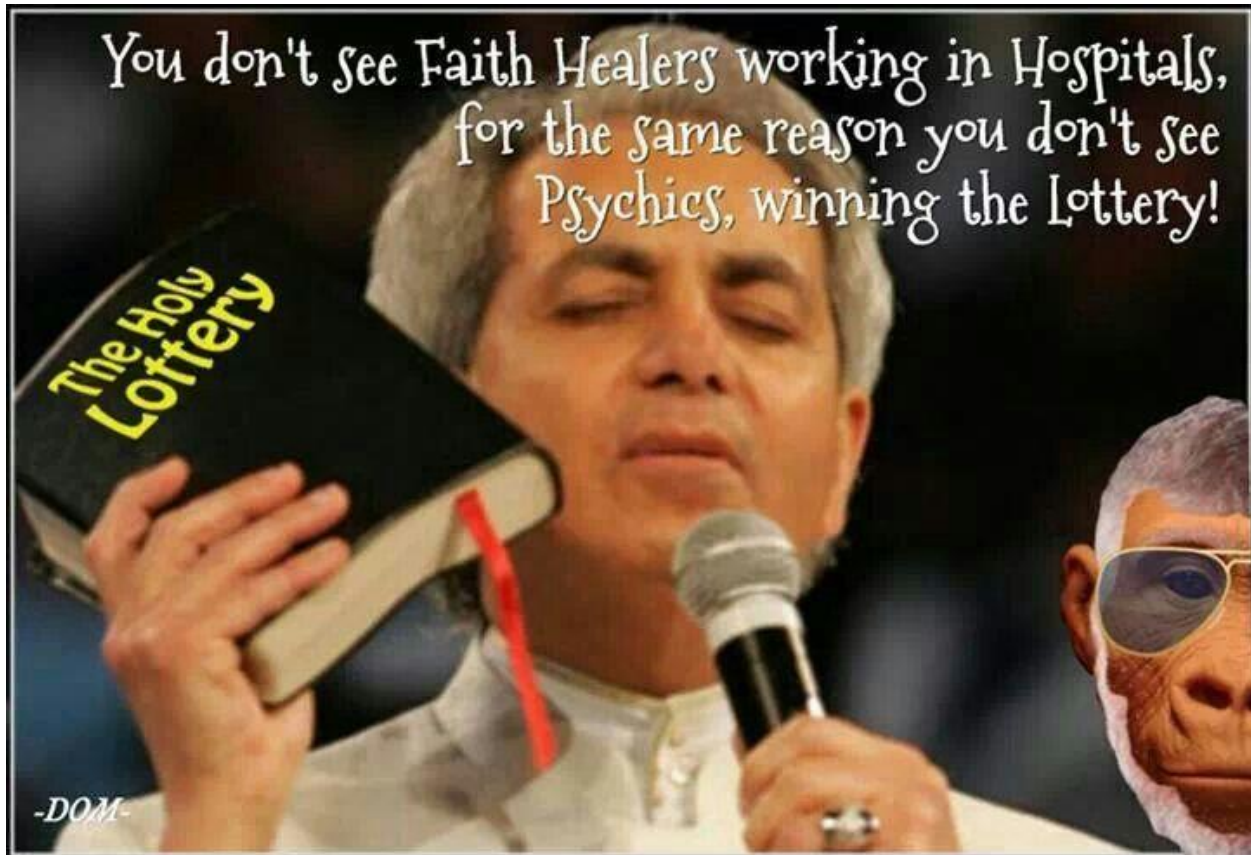
*"All those perfectly adequate brain-donors out there and Igor has to pick me a televangelist!"*





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# Defenses of Faith Healers

By Frank Jamerson

When Scripture is quoted to show that miraculous gifts accomplished their purposes and ceased, those who believe in faith healers make several responses. We will notice some of them and reply to them.

The first response is usually, “Don’t you believe that God has the power to heal?” When we challenge faith healers, we are not denying God’s power to do whatever he chooses. God has the power to make men out of dust and women out of ribs, and he once did it, but he is not doing that any more! The Devil knew that Jesus had power to turn stones into bread, but the fact is that he did not choose to do so. He did produce water out of a rock for Moses, but faith healers never have duplicated that one. The question is not whether he has the power to do what he chooses, but what does the Bible say about miraculous gifts?

Another frequent response is, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8). Then the conclusion is inferred that if he ever gave miraculous gifts to men he must continue to do so, or he has changed. This is a classic case of “proof-texting” – taking a verse out of context to try to prove a preconceived opinion. The verse was written to give assurance to Christians that God would be with them and that the Christ who had been preached to them by others has not been superceded and would never change. This does not prove that God’s ways have never changed. In fact, the same writer had earlier written, “For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law” (Heb. 7:12). The fact that God changed his law did not mean that God has changed. Paul wrote the Corinthians that when “the perfect” (the completed revelation) came, then that which is “in part” (partial revelations) would cease (1 Cor. 13:10).

Faith healers try to make “that which is perfect” refer to Christ and the second coming, but even if it did refer to that, it would not fit their interpretation of Hebrews 13:8. The passage says that Jesus would remain the same “forever,” and that would include after the second coming! So, according to their argument that miraculous gifts cannot cease because Jesus is “the same yesterday, today and forever,” miraculous gifts will have to continue eternally.

The favorite argument of many faith healers today is that physical healing is in the atonement and all a person has to do is “claim his healing.” They misuse Matthew 8:16,17, which is used of the work Jesus did before the atonement. Christ’s death was for forgiveness of sins, not physical healing. “Who himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Pet. 2:24). If physical healing is in the atonement, then it should be as universal as spiritual healing! What sick person would not “claim physical healing” if it was as available as forgiveness? A little bit of “good old country honesty” would help here! Why did Paul not “claim his healing” if it was in the atonement (2 Cor. 12:7-10)? Why did he leave Trophimus at Miletus sick (2 Tim. 4:20), instead of telling him to “claim his healing”? Why aren’t all who claim to be saved by faith healers today also healed of their infirmities? They should have no sick disciples if their doctrine is correct! (One sure way to know whether your sins were forgiven would be if you could “take up your bed and walk!” Instead, they have many devout believers who continue on their beds.)

Another response is, “Don’t you believe in the power of prayer?” The implication here is that if you do not believe in miraculous gifts today, then you do not believe in praying for the sick. This does not follow at all. We believe in praying for our “daily bread” (Matt. 6:11), but we do not expect to receive it like the Israelites received manna (Exod. 16:4), or like Elisha multiplied the widow’s oil (2 Kgs. 4:1-7).

God can answer prayers through his providence. We believe in praying for prosperity and health (3 Jn. 2), but God does not have to perform a miracle in order to answer these requests. God answers prayer, but he has not promised miraculous powers to men today. There is a difference between “divine healing” (which the Bible teaches) and ,’miraculous healing” (which has ceased).

Faith healers claim that “power will go forth from my hands,” but when they fail, the tune changes to “I have no power, God does the healing.” In this they tell the truth! They do not have any power, and that is a contrast to what the apostles claimed. Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk” (Acts 3:6). Peter was authorized by Jesus to perform miracles and he plainly said that he had that power. The apostles also could lay hands on others and give them that power (Acts 8:18), but those claiming miraculous powers today have not had the hands of an apostle laid on them and they cannot do what the apostles did.

The apostles of Christ used miracles to prove that the message that they preached was from God (Mk. 16:15-20). Faith healers today use the word to try to prove that they can do miracles. The miracles of the apostles confirmed the terms of salvation - “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Faith healers deny the message that was confirmed, teach salvation by faith only, and argue that they have apostolic powers!

Guardian of Truth XXXVI: 7, p. 212



## **“Faith Healer,” Heal Thyself**

By Donald P. Ames

During a recent visit to one of the local hospitals to see some there who were sick, I looked up and was surprised to see Steve Dyson, Minister of the United Pentecostal Church in Newport, Arkansas. Mr. Dyson and I have been acquainted, and good friends, as a result of the fact our radio broadcasts on Sunday morning are within a half-hour of each other and also because of mutual acquaintances in the past. Yet, neither of us has had any hesitation in opposing what we believe to be false doctrine regarding the positions taken by the other (although Steve Dyson has let it be known he has no desire to engage in a public discussion of these differences). I point this out to note that one can disagree without always being disagreeable, and that friendship doesn't mean that one must appease the falsehoods taught by others (Gal. 1:10).

But, to return to the discussion at hand, I enquired from Mr. Dyson as to the nature of his visit and problem; and learned that his throat was swollen and so sore that he could hardly swallow. I then asked him, since the Pentecostals believe they have the ability to perform miracles today as the apostles did in the times of the N.T., why didn't he just heal himself? The only reply I got was that “even Paul had his `thorn in the flesh.’ ” This was the same reply I received from Bill Lewis, Minister of the First Apostolic Church (same fellowship) in Aurora, Illinois when he lost his voice during a debate with Larry Hafley (see my report on the Hafley-Lewis-Bishop Debate, Truth Magazine, July 20, 1970), and also when he later had to undergo heart surgery and was laid up for about six months.

Now, I am wondering about their consistency in using this passage in light of what Paul actually said -and why- in 2 Cor. 12. Paul received his “thorn in the flesh” because he had been caught up into the third heaven, and this “messenger of Satan” was to buffet him, “lest I should be exalted above measure.” What had happened to him in this instance was not something that was common to man, and therefore God used this “thorn in the flesh” to keep him humble. Did either Mr. Lewis or Mr. Dyson experience such a glorious view of the third heaven? Surely, they will not contend problems of being “a great speaker” necessitated God going to such measures - nor that they are so much greater than others that God had to go to such measures to make them learn the lesson of humility (and not do the same to their fellow-man as well).

Secondly, when Paul sought the Lord for relief, He replied, “My grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Cor. 12:9), and from this Paul concluded, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” However, both Mr. Dyson and Mr. Lewis sought relief at the hands of a medical doctor. Now, if they are going to use part of a passage, why not use the rest? If God will not heal their infirmities, why not accept the fact “My grace is sufficient for thee”? Or, do they think they can circumvent the “judgment of God” by obtaining relief from another source and thus destroy God’s “purpose” in giving them this “thorn in the side”? The very fact Paul and others of the apostolic age had physical ailments that were not healed (Phil. 2:27, 1 Tim. 5:23, 2 Tim. 4:20, 2 Cor. 12:7) is evidence that physical healing was not the goal of Christ, but that these miracles were to confirm the word (Mk. 16:20, Heb. 2:4), and that not even the apostles could use them for other purposes (such as their own healing or general healing)- and that once that word had been confirmed, the miracles were to cease (1 Cor. 13:8-10, Eph. 4:11-13, Jas. 1:25, Jn. 20:30-31). It would seem that being caught in such a contradictory position would cause some of these “faith healers” to take another look at their own doctrine in light of the Word of God (see Rom. 10:2). - *Christian Courier*



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# Bogus Faith or Spiritual Healers

Faith or spiritual healers offer their services to people who may have:

- **business problems**
- **marital disputes**
- **poor health**
- **friends or relatives in poor health or**
- **difficulty finding matrimonial partners for their children**

They will:

- **advertise their services through local and national radio, newspaper adverts and flyers which are delivered door-to-door**
- **omit to mention the cost at the outset**
- **claim to be spiritual healers who can cure illnesses and other problems**
- **claim to have many years of experience as successful healers and say they provide a 100% guarantee of positive results**
- **claim that money given to them will be returned to their victims many times over and threaten those who do not pay with curses and black magic.**



**“Go and sell everything you own and give it to the poor, so you will have treasure in Heaven. Then come, and follow me.” –Matthew 19:21**



**Joel Osteen – Net Worth  
\$40 Million**



**Creflo Dollar – Net Worth  
\$27 Million**



**Benny Hinn – Net Worth  
\$42 Million**



**T.D. Jakes – Net Worth  
\$150 Million**



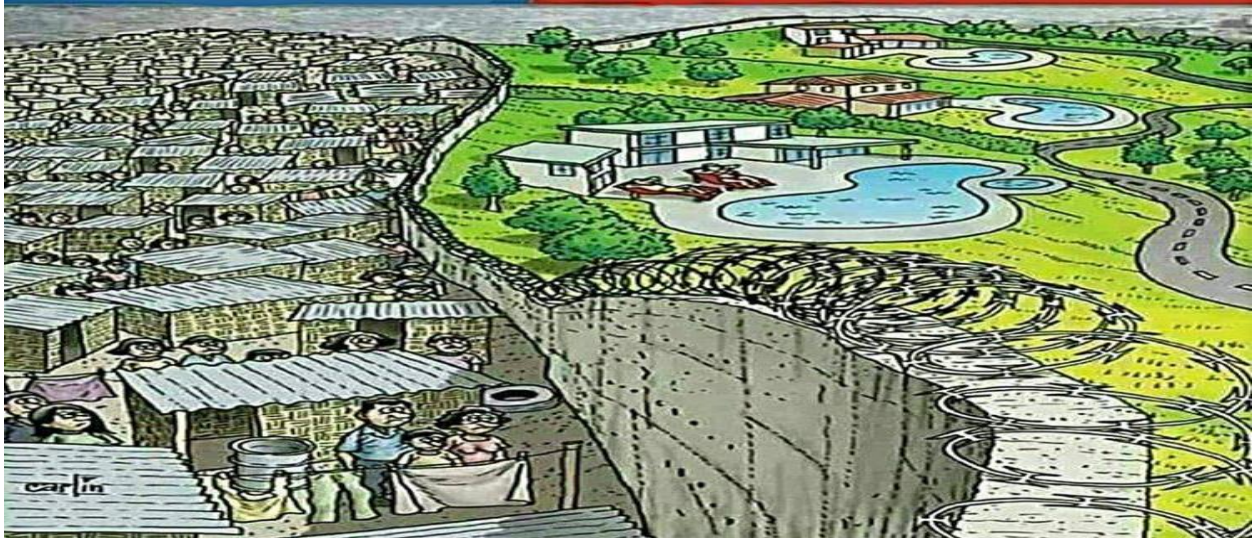
**Joyce Meyer – Net Worth  
\$25 Million**



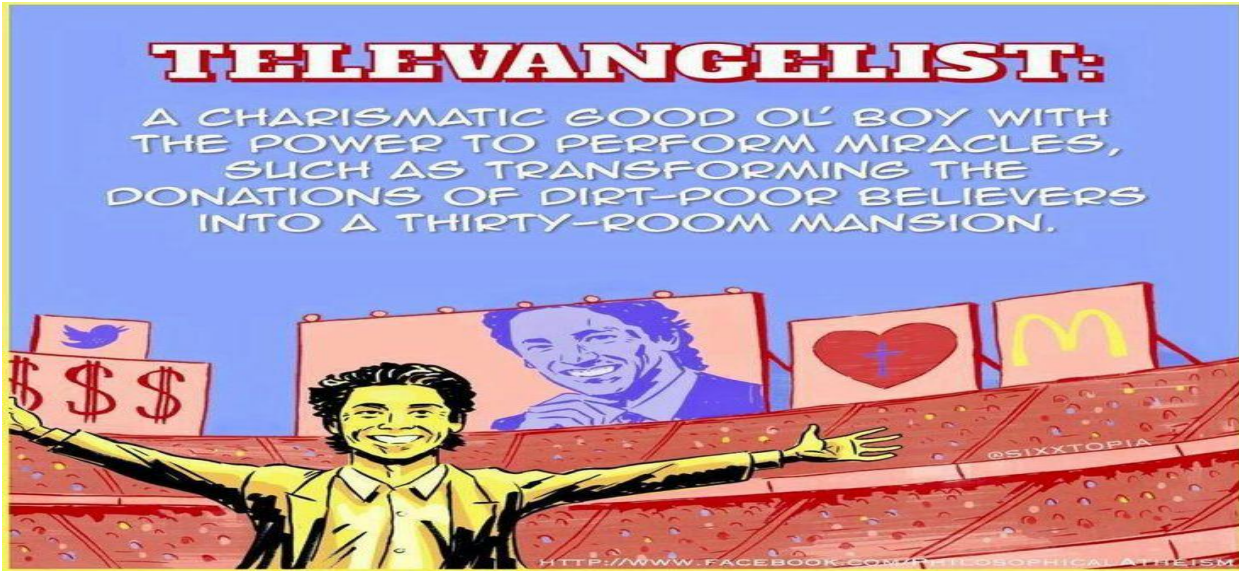
**Kenneth Copeland – Net  
Worth Unknown; boasts  
that he is a billionaire**

## **Evangelical Flock**






## **Evangelical Pastors**







## TELEVANGELIST INFIDELITY MATRIX

	CRYING EMPLOYEE	RECIDIVISM	CHURCH EMPLOYEE	HOOKER	DUDE HOOKER	FRAUD	METH	WIFE PRESENT AT TV CONFESSION
 BAKKER			X			X		X
 SWAGGART	X	X		X				X
 HAGGARD					X		X	X
 LAMB								X
 DANIELS				X				

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## **LIST OF CHRISTIAN EVANGELISTS INVOLVED IN SCANDALS:**

### **Aimee Semple McPherson, 1920s–40s**

Main article: [Aimee Semple McPherson](#)

One of the most famous evangelist scandals involved Canadian-born Aimee Semple McPherson in the 1920s, who allegedly faked her own death. She later claimed that she had been kidnapped, but a grand jury could neither prove that a kidnapping occurred, nor that she had faked it. [Roberta Semple Salter](#), her daughter from her first marriage, became estranged from Semple McPherson and successfully sued her mother's attorney for slander during the 1930s. As a result of this she was cut out of her mother's will. Aimee Semple McPherson died in 1944 from an accidental overdose of [barbiturates](#).

### **Lonnie Frisbee, 1970s–1980s**

Main article: [Lonnie Frisbee](#)

Lonnie Frisbee was an American closeted gay Pentecostal evangelist and self-described "seeing prophet" in the late 1960s and 1970s who despite his "hippie" appearance had notable success as a minister and evangelist. Frisbee was a key figure in the [Jesus Movement](#) and was involved in the rise of two worldwide denominations ([Calvary Chapel](#) and the [Vineyard Movement](#)). Both churches later disowned him because of his active homosexuality, removing him first from leadership positions, then ultimately firing him. He eventually died from [AIDS](#) in 1993.

### **Marjoe Gortner, early 1970s**

Main article: [Marjoe Gortner](#)

Gortner rose to fame in the late 1940s as a child preacher, but he had simply been trained to do this by his parents and he had no personal faith. He was able to perform "miracles" and received large amounts of money in donations. After suffering a crisis of conscience, he invited a film crew to accompany him on a final preaching tour. The resulting film, [Marjoe](#), mixes footage of revival meetings with Gortner's explanations of how evangelists manipulate their audiences. It won the [1972 Academy Award](#) for [Best Documentary Feature](#), but was never screened in the [Southern United States](#) due to fears that it would cause outrage in the [Bible Belt](#).<sup>[1]</sup>

### **Billy James Hargis, early 1970s**

Main article: [Billy James Hargis](#)

Hargis was a prolific author and radio evangelist. Hargis formed [American Christian College](#) in 1971 to teach fundamentalist Christian principles. However, a [sex scandal](#) erupted at the College, involving claims that Hargis had sex with male and female students. Hargis was forced out of American Christian College's presidency as a result. Further scandals erupted when members of Hargis' youth choir, the "All American Kids", accused Hargis of sexual misconduct as well. The college eventually closed down in the mid-1970s. Hargis denied the allegations publicly.

### **Jim & Tammy Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart, 1986 and 1991**

Main articles: [Jimmy Swaggart](#) and [Jim Bakker](#)

In 1986, evangelist Jimmy Swaggart began on-screen attacks against fellow televangelists Marvin Gorman and Jim Bakker. He uncovered Gorman's affair with a member of Gorman's congregation, and also helped expose Bakker's infidelity (which was arranged by a colleague

while on an out-of-state trip).<sup>[2]</sup> These exposures received widespread media coverage. Gorman retaliated in kind by hiring a private investigator to uncover Swaggart's own adulterous indiscretions with a prostitute.<sup>[3]</sup> Swaggart was subsequently forced to step down from his pulpit for a year and made a tearful televised apology in February 1988 to his congregation, saying "I have sinned against you, my Lord, and I would ask that your precious blood would wash and cleanse every stain until it is in the seas of God's forgiveness."<sup>[4][5]</sup>

Swaggart was caught again by California police three years later in 1991 with another prostitute, Rosemary Garcia, who was riding with him in his car when he was stopped for driving on the wrong side of the road. When asked why she was with Swaggart, she replied, "He asked me for sex. I mean, that's why he stopped me. That's what I do. I'm a prostitute."<sup>[6]</sup>

### **Peter Popoff, 1987**

Main article: [Peter Popoff](#)

A self-proclaimed prophet and faith healer in the 1980s, Popoff's ministry went bankrupt in 1987 after magician and skeptic [James Randi](#) and [Steve Shaw debunked](#) his methods by showing that instead of receiving information about audience members from [supernatural](#) sources, he received it through an in-ear receiver.<sup>[7]</sup>

### **Morris Cerullo, 1990s**

Main article: [Morris Cerullo](#)

A number of incidents involving California-based televangelist [Morris Cerullo](#) caused outrage in the [United Kingdom](#) during the 1990s. Cerullo's claims of faith healing were the focus of particular concern. At a London crusade in 1992, he pronounced a child [cancer](#) sufferer to be healed, yet the girl died two months later. Multiple complaints were upheld against [satellite television](#) channels transmitting Cerullo's claims of faith-healing, and a panel of doctors concluded that Cerullo's claims of miraculous healing powers could not be substantiated. Cerullo also produced fund-raising material which was condemned as unethical by a number of religious leaders, as it implied that giving money to his organisation would result in family members becoming Christians.<sup>[8]</sup>

### **Mike Warnke, 1991**

Main article: [Mike Warnke](#)

Warnke was a popular Christian evangelist and comedian during the 1970s and 1980s. He claimed in his autobiography, *[The Satan Seller](#)* (1973), that he had once been deeply involved in a Satanic cult and was a Satanic priest before converting to Christianity. In 1991, [Cornerstone magazine](#) launched an investigation into Warnke's life and testimony. It investigated Warnke's life, from interviews with over one hundred personal friends and acquaintances, to his ministry's tax receipts. Its investigation turned up damaging evidence of fraud and deceit. The investigation also revealed the unflattering circumstances surrounding Warnke's multiple marriages, affairs, and divorces. Most critically, however, the investigation showed how Warnke could not possibly have done the many things he claimed to have done throughout his nine-month tenure as a Satanist, much less become a drug-addicted dealer or become a Satanic high priest.

### **Robert Tilton, 1991**

Main article: [Robert Tilton](#)

Tilton is an American televangelist who achieved notoriety in the 1980s and early 1990s through his paid television program *[Success-N-Life](#)*. At its peak, it aired in all 235 American TV markets. In 1991, [Diane Sawyer](#) and [ABC News](#) conducted an investigation of Tilton. The investigation,

broadcast on ABC's Primetime Live on November 21, 1991, found that Tilton's ministry threw away prayer requests without reading them, keeping only the money or valuables sent to them by viewers, garnering his ministry an estimated \$80 million [USD](#) a year. In the original investigation, one of Tilton's former prayer hotline operators claimed that the ministry cared little for desperate followers who called for prayer, saying that Tilton had a computer installed in July 1989 to make sure that the phone operators were off the line in seven minutes. Tilton sued ABC for libel in 1992, but the case was dismissed in 1993, and Tilton's show was off the air by October 30, 1993.

### **W. V. Grant, 1996 and 2003**

Main article: [W. V. Grant](#)

Like Peter Popoff, Grant was investigated by [James Randi](#) regarding his faith healing claims. He was then imprisoned for tax evasion in 1996. After restarting his ministry upon release, a TV investigation found that claims of healing he made at a 2003 revival in Atlanta were false.

### **Bob Moorehead, 1998**

Main article: [Bob Moorehead](#)

Moorehead, pastor of the [Overlake Christian Church](#) from the 1970s to June, 1998 was arrested in July, 1996 on a charge of indecent exposure in a public restroom in Daytona Beach, Florida. He stepped down amid allegations of molestation of adult members during baptism and wedding ceremonies that went as far back as 20 years earlier. <sup>[9]</sup>

### **Roy Clements, 1999**

Main article: [Roy Clements](#)

Clements was a prominent figure within British evangelical christianity. In 1999, he revealed he was in a homosexual relationship with another man, resigned his pastorship, and separated from his wife. He had written a number of well-received books which were withdrawn from sale when the news broke.<sup>[10]</sup>

### **John Paulk, 2000**

Main article: [John Paulk](#)

John Paulk (no relation to [Earl Paulk](#)) is a former leader of [Focus on the Family's](#) Love Won Out conference and former chairman of the board for [Exodus International North America](#). His claimed shedding of homosexuality is also the subject of his autobiography *Not Afraid to Change*. In September 2000, Paulk was found and photographed in a [Washington, D.C.](#) gay bar, and accused by opponents of flirting with male patrons at the bar. Later questioned by gay rights activist [Wayne Besen](#), Paulk denied being in the bar despite photographic proof to the contrary. Initially, FoF's Dr. [James Dobson](#) sided with Paulk and supported his claims. Subsequently, Paulk, who himself had written about his habit of lying while he openly lived as a homosexual, confessed to being in the bar, but claimed he entered the establishment for reasons other than sexual pursuits. Paulk retained his Board seat for Exodus, however he did so while on probation. Paulk did not run again for chairman of the board of Exodus when his term expired.

### **Paul Crouch, 2004**

Main article: [Paul Crouch](#)

Paul Crouch is the founder and president of the [Trinity Broadcasting Network](#), or TBN, the world's largest [evangelical Christian television network](#), as well as the former host of TBN's flagship variety show, [Praise the Lord](#). In September 2004, the [Los Angeles Times](#) published a



series of articles raising questions about the fundraising practices and financial transparency of TBN, as well as the allegations of a former ministry employee, [Enoch Lonnie Ford](#), that he had a homosexual affair with Crouch during the 1990s. TBN denied the allegations, claiming that Ford's claims were part of an [extortion](#) scheme and that the *Times* was a "left-wing and anti-Christian newspaper." In 2005, Ford appeared at the taping of the [ION Television](#) show [Lie Detector](#). The show's Producers decided not to air the show, and the outcome of the lie detector test was never released. Consequently, none of the alleged charges were substantiated.

### **Douglas Goodman, 2004**

Douglas Goodman, an evangelical preacher, and his wife Erica were pastors of Victory Christian Centre in [London, England](#). The church was one of the largest in the United Kingdom. He came into notoriety when he was jailed for three and a half years for the sexual assault of four members of his congregation in 2004. VCC was closed by the [Charity Commission](#), but his wife Erica started a new church, Victory to Victory, in Wembley. Douglas has upon his release resumed full pastoral ministry alongside his wife.<sup>[11][12][13][14][15]</sup>

### **Ted Haggard, 2006**

Main article: [Ted Haggard](#)

Ted Haggard was the pastor of the [New Life Church](#) in [Colorado Springs, Colorado](#) and was the president of the [National Association of Evangelicals](#) (NAE) from 2003 until November 2006. Haggard's position allowed him occasional access to President [George W. Bush](#). In 2006 it was alleged that Haggard had been regularly visiting a male prostitute who also provided him with [methamphetamine](#). Haggard admitted his wrongdoing and resigned as pastor of New Life church and as president of the NAE. The high-profile case was significant also because it immediately preceded the [2006 mid-term elections](#) and may have even affected national voting patterns<sup>[citation needed]</sup>. In January 2009, Haggard admitted to a second homosexual relationship with a male church member on CNN-TV and other national media, and when asked, would not directly answer a question about his other possible homosexual relationships.<sup>[17]</sup> Ted Haggard has recently started a new church.<sup>[18]</sup>

### **Paul Barnes, 2006**

Main article: [Paul Barnes](#)

Paul Barnes is the founder and former senior minister of the evangelical church Grace Chapel in Douglas County, Colorado. He confessed his homosexual activity to the church board, and his resignation was accepted on December 7, 2006.<sup>[19]</sup> He started the church in his basement and watched it reach a membership of 2,100 in his 28 years of leadership. This scandal was notable because it was similar to Ted Haggard's, it occurred in the same state and about the same time.

### **Lonnie Latham, 2006**

Main article: [Lonnie Latham](#)

In 2006, Latham, the senior pastor of South Tulsa Baptist Church and a member of the powerful [Southern Baptist Convention](#) Executive Committee, was arrested for "offering to engage in an act of lewdness" with a male undercover police officer.<sup>[20]</sup>

### **Gilbert Deya, 2006**

Main article: [Gilbert Deya](#)

Kenyan-born Deya moved to the United Kingdom in the 1990s and started a number of churches. He claims to have supernatural powers that allow him to make infertile women

become pregnant and give birth. However, police investigations in the [UK](#) and [Kenya](#) concluded that Deya and his wife were stealing Kenyan babies. Deya was arrested in London during December 2006 and as of April 2010 he is currently fighting [extradition](#) to Kenya.<sup>[21]</sup>

### **Earl Paulk, 2007**

Main article: [Earl Paulk](#)

Earl Paulk (no relation to [John Paulk](#)) was the founder and head pastor of Chapel Hill Harvester Church in [Decatur, Georgia](#) from 1960 until the 1990s. A large number of women from the congregation came forward during the 1990s claiming that Paulk had sexual relations with them. Some of these claims have subsequently been proven correct. Moreover, Donnie Earl Paulk, the current senior pastor of the church and nephew of Earl Paulk, had a court-ordered DNA test in 2007 which showed that he was Earl's son, not his nephew, which means that Earl and his sister-in-law had had a sexual relationship which led to Donnie's birth.<sup>[23]</sup>

### **Coy Privette, 2007**

Main article: [Coy Privette](#)

Privette is a [Baptist pastor](#), [conservative](#) activist, and politician in the [U.S. state](#) of [North Carolina](#). Privette was president of the Christian Action League and a prominent figure in North Carolina moral battles. In 2007, Privette resigned as president of North Carolina's Christian Action League and from the Board of Directors of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, following revelations on July 19 that he had been charged with six counts of aiding and abetting prostitution.<sup>[24]</sup>

### **Thomas Wesley Weeks, III, 2007**

Main article: [Thomas Wesley Weeks, III](#)

Weeks married fellow evangelist [Juanita Bynum](#) in 2002, but they separated in May 2007. In August 2007, Weeks physically assaulted Bynum in a hotel parking lot and was convicted of the crime in March 2008. The couple divorced in June 2008 and Weeks remarried in October 2009.<sup>[25]</sup>

### **Michael Reid, 2008**

Main article: [Michael Reid](#)

Bishop [Michael Reid](#) (born 1944) is a Christian evangelist in [Essex, England](#) and founder of [Michael Reid Ministries](#) who resigned from the role of pastor at Peniel Church in April 2008, after admitting to an eight-year extra-marital sexual relationship. The scandal was widely reported online<sup>[26][27][28]</sup> and in UK newspapers.<sup>[29][30]</sup> He has since re-developed an itinerant evangelistic ministry and has been speaking at a number of churches in the UK and overseas.

### **Joe Barron, 2008**

Joe Barron, one of the 40 ministers at [Prestonwood Baptist Church](#), one of the largest churches in the United States with 26,000 members, was arrested on May 15, 2008 for solicitation of a minor after driving from the Dallas area to [Bryan, Texas](#), in order to allegedly engage in sexual relations with what he thought to be a 13 year-old girl he had met online. Barron's online communications had in fact been with undercover law enforcement official.<sup>[31][32][33]</sup>

### **George Alan Rekers, 2010**

Main article: [George Alan Rekers](#)

Penn Bullock and Brandon K. Thorp of the [Miami New Times](#) reported on May 4, 2010, that on April 13, 2010, Christian leader [George Alan Rekers](#) was encountered and photographed at

Miami International Airport returning from an extended overseas trip with a twenty-year-old "[rent boy](#)", or gay male prostitute, known as "Lucien" (later identified as Jo-Vanni Roman). Given his opinion on homosexuals and homosexual behavior, the scandal surrounds Rekers' decision to employ a homosexual escort as a traveling companion, and how that runs contrary to Rekers' public stances on such issues.

Rekers claimed that Lucien was there to help carry Rekers' luggage as Rekers had allegedly had recent surgery, yet Rekers was seen carrying his own luggage when he and Lucien were spotted at the airport.<sup>[35]</sup> On his blog, Rekers denied having sex with the man.<sup>[36]</sup> In subsequent interviews, Roman said Rekers had paid him to provide nude massages daily, which included genital touching.

### **Eddie L. Long, 2010**

Main article: [Eddie L. Long](#)

In September 2010 several civil complaints were filed against Eddie L. Long by men that stated Mr. Long used his position as the church leader to entice or coerce the men into consensual sexual relationships in exchange for money, travel and goods. At a press event on September 26, 2010 Mr. Long stated he would fight the civil complaints in court and would not comment on the allegations. On December 7th 2010, Rev. Long settled the matter out of court.<sup>[37]</sup>

### **Vaughn Reeves, 2010**

Special Judge Dena Martin ordered former pastor Vaughn Reeves to serve consecutive six-year terms for each of nine fraud counts, in a scheme that cost about 2,900 investors \$13.1 million.<sup>[38]</sup> Among aggravating factors, Martin found Reeves targeted people over age 65 and used religion to influence them. Reeves' attorney plans to appeal.

Investigators said Reeves and his three sons used their now-defunct company, Alanar, to trick about 11,000 investors into buying bonds worth \$120 million secured by mortgages on church construction projects.<sup>[39]</sup>

Instead, Reeves and his sons diverted money from new investments to pay off previous investors, pocketing \$6 million and buying luxuries.<sup>[39]</sup>

### **Stephen Green, 2011**

Stephen Green, a former Chairman of the Conservative Family Campaign who attends an [Assemblies of God](#) Church, is head of [Christian Voice](#), a Conservative Christian pressure group in the UK.

In January 2011, Green's former wife, Caroline Green, accused him of repeatedly physically assaulting her and their children, including one incident where he allegedly beat her with a weapon until she bled, and another in which their son allegedly required hospital treatment after having been beaten with a piece of wood.<sup>[40]</sup>

### **Albert Odulele, 2011**

In February 2011, [televangelist](#) and senior pastor of Glory house London: Dr. [Albert Odulele](#) was charged with two counts of [sexual assault](#), one involving a 14-year-old boy and another on a 21-year-old man. Although he initially denied the charges, he later pleaded guilty and confessed that he had been battling with his sexuality for many years. He was subsequently sentenced at Woolwich crown court to 8 and 6 months in Prison to run concurrently. He will be on the sex offenders register for 5 years. He is currently serving his sentence. <sup>[41]</sup>

# After Gloria Copeland Banishes the Flu, Let's Look at the Dallas Televangelists' Biggest Crimes and Misdemeanors

[STEPHEN YOUNG](#) | FEBRUARY 14, 2018 | 4:00AM

Last week, Gloria Copeland, matriarch of Kenneth Copeland's Tarrant County TV ministry empire, told everyone the truth they needed to hear: The flu season, the same one that's killed more than 60 people in Dallas County and sickened thousands of others, didn't *really* exist. Anyone with true faith did not need to worry, because Copeland was about to give them their Jesus shot.

“Flu, I bind you off of the people in the name of Jesus,” Copeland said, uttering a phrase that, in the eyes of the *Observer's* Jim Schutze, confirmed that she was, in fact, [a witch](#).

Copeland's bizarre behavior is but the latest leap off the deep end for North Texas' vibrant community of televangelist hucksters, who've been plying their trade here for decades. While Copeland has our collective memories' stirred, let's take a look at the best of the worst of Dallas' TV preachers, starting right back with the Copelands.

## 1. The measles break out at Kenneth Copeland's Eagle Mountain

**International Church.** — Preach that there's a link between vaccines and autism, as Kenneth Copeland did on his [online talk show](#), and you probably shouldn't be too surprised when the measles break out at your church, as they did at Eagle Mountain [in August 2013](#).

**2. Robert Tilton goes broke.** — The silver-coiffed, McKinney-born Tilton was one of the first major preachers of the prosperity gospel, which taught that all problems in life, including poverty, existed only because of sin. He encouraged his followers to give him whatever they could, regardless their financial station, and lived on the proceeds until being felled by a *Primetime Live* investigation in 1991, which found hundreds of pounds of prayer requests sent to Tilton in the garbage outside an Oklahoma recycling plant.

In 2016, WFAA's Brett Shipp tracked Tilton down in California. He was still preaching, but his flock was so small they met in the conference room of a Marriott.

**3. Bedford preacher Marcus Lamb admits his affair live on TV.** — In a excruciating bit of television in 2010, Marcus Lamb, co-founder of the Daystar Christian television network, admitted that he'd an affair and was the subject of a Satan-inspired extortion plot.

"They're trying to take our pain and turn it to their gain," Lamb said as he sat next to his wife, Joni Lamb. "We're not going to take God's money to keep from being humiliated."

Lamb must not have been too humiliated. He followed up his confession with trips to appear on *Good Morning America* and the Dr. Phil show.

**4. W.V. Grant goes to jail.** — After taking over the Soul's Harbor Church in Oak Cliff in 1983, W.V. Grant moved his flock to a 28-acre parcel near Dallas Baptist University in 1987. From there, he built the rechristened Eagle's Nest Family Church into a 5,000-member empire.

In 1996, federal authorities indicted Grant for tax evasion. One piece of evidence, an undercover video tape, showed Grant admitting to using one hundred thousand in contributions to the church to pay the down payment on a \$1.2 million home in DeSoto. A judge sentenced Grant to 16 months in prison, a \$30,000 fine and forced him to send the details of his conviction to everyone on his mailing list.



Eagle's Nest sold its building to the Potter's House, where it became the center of TD Jakes massive empire. After getting out of prison, Grant began preaching again, eventually purchasing the historic First Church of Christ, Scientist on Cadiz Street downtown, at which he still preaches.

**5. Benny Hinn gets raided.** — Last summer, the FBI raided the Grapevine offices of Benny Hinn, the preacher best known for his "Miracle Crusades" at which he performs faith healings at sports stadiums around the world. While Hinn, who admits to taking home a salary in excess of \$500,000 a year and flies around the world on a private jet — hasn't been charged with anything, he and his family are used to being under investigation.

In 2007, Iowa Sen. Chuck Grassley investigated Hinn and six other televangelists with the Senate Finance Committee. In 2013, Brazilian police arrested Hinn's son Joshua after he and several of Hinn's bodyguards allegedly attacked a deaf man who approached the stage during one of the elder Hinn's revivals in Brazil.

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