

Understanding and Answering

PROSPERITY GOSPEL

Source: Veritas International University RE505 course notes.

Source: https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/field-guide-on-false-teaching-prosperity-gospel?srsId=AfmBOoq88U3m0UUFEB9k8l7T01_gAT_tQb-oUsfBB0XcgZaggvhiWeWf

Great Mike Winger You Tube series on refuting Word
Faith/Prosperity gospel :

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZ3iRMLYFIHv8qF8ajudjyT8hOTdK7CXP>

Mike Winger Series on Benny Hinn:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2Ip_3A32W0&list=PLZ3iRMLYFIHujAK-ADyDk9Cc4s9gzDq-5

2 Timothy 4:3-4

“For *the* time will come when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires, and they will turn their ears away from the truth and will turn aside to myths.”

1. Biblical Interpretation:

- Progressive Christianity: Views the Bible as a historical and cultural document open to multiple interpretations, and emphasizes applying its teachings in the context of contemporary life. This approach acknowledges potential inconsistencies and contradictions in the Bible, and may reject passages considered to be promoting injustice or negativity.
- Word of Faith Movement: Generally interprets the Bible literally, often emphasizing specific verses to support its teachings on health, wealth, and prosperity. Another related term is the Prosperity Gospel.

2. Emphasis and Focus:

- **Progressive Christianity:** Prioritizes social justice, inclusivity, and compassion, seeking to reinterpret Christian teachings in light of modern societal values. Progressive Christians actively engage in social action to address issues like poverty, inequality, and environmental concerns.
- **Word of Faith Movement:** Focuses on the power of spoken words, positive confession, and faith as means to achieve health, wealth, and success. This is also known as the "Health and Wealth Gospel" or "Prosperity Gospel".

3. Faith and the Spoken Word:

- Progressive Christianity: Faith is understood as trust in God's promises and sovereign will, emphasizing submission to God's will.
- Word of Faith Movement: Faith is seen as a force or tool that can be manipulated through spoken words (positive confession) to achieve desired outcomes. The belief is that speaking in agreement with God's promises can release God's power in your life.

4. View of Suffering and Trials:

- Progressive Christianity: Recognizes that suffering is a natural and often expected part of the Christian life, and that God uses it for growth and development.
- Word of Faith Movement: Often teaches that sickness and poverty are consequences of sin or a lack of faith, and that material blessings are a sign of God's favor.

5. Role of Jesus:

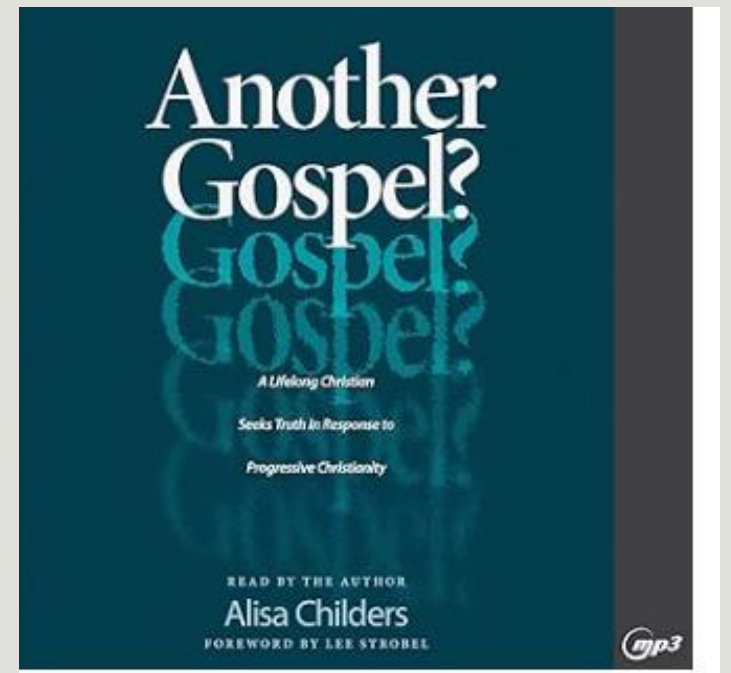
- **Progressive Christianity:** Views Jesus as a model of inclusivity, peace, and social justice, emphasizing his teachings and example. Some progressive Christians view Jesus more as a moral example to follow rather than the divine Son of God.
- **Word of Faith Movement:** Often portrays Jesus as a model of wealth and power, suggesting believers can imitate him by claiming their inheritance of prosperity and health. This view can diverge from the traditional understanding of Jesus' humble life and suffering.

In Summary:

These two movements represent contrasting perspectives within Christianity, differing significantly in their approach to biblical interpretation, their central focus, and their understanding of faith, suffering, and the role of Jesus.

Progressive Christianity emphasizes social justice and contextualized interpretation, while the Word of Faith movement centers on prosperity and health attained through faith and spoken words.

Progressive Christianity



The Bible is the Word of God

1 Thessalonians 2:13: “And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers?”

The Bible is the only thing that is infallible and is the source of teaching:

2 Timothy 3:16–17 declares, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work”?

Progressive Christianity

Major topics to look for if the church is moving to a Progressive Christianity Teaching:

<https://www.alisachildersblog.com/blog/5-signs-your-church-might-be-heading-toward-progressive-christianity>

Paul wrote to the church of Galatia in [Galatians 1:6-7](#), “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.”

Allan Parr brings clarity to the quest to understand progressive Christianity and why it is dangerous: “The progressive Christian movement says that the church needs to revisit and adjust its methods, practices, and beliefs as the culture changes. In other words, the church should conform to culture rather than holding to the transformative power of the gospel to point culture to Jesus.”

Theology

The prosperity gospel, also known as the health and wealth gospel, is a Protestant Christian belief that faith can lead to wealth, health, and happiness. It teaches that God wants believers to be blessed in this life, and that material riches and physical well-being are God's will for the faithful.

Theology

The prosperity gospel is based on the idea that believers can use faith, positive thoughts, and donations to the church to break the curses of poverty and illness. It also teaches that material success is a sign of God's favor and blessings

Theology

The prosperity gospel has been a significant influence in Christianity since the early 20th century. It is popular in impoverished communities. However, it can also be criticized for being predatory and manipulative, especially when churches require heavy tithing

Theology

The prosperity gospel was influenced by the New Thought movement, an early 20th-century mind-healing movement that taught that individuals were responsible for their own happiness and health.

Word Faith (WF) Movement

Difficulty of Study

- Movement, not a cult.
- Spectrum.
- Major leaders on TV — many unbiblical ideas on many occasions.
- Other WF leaders may or may not teach some or all of these ideas.
- No single WF leader subscribes to virtually all the particular problem doctrines I will cover today.
- For the sake of discernment, today's session will focus on some of the big problems in the movement, without implying that every person in the movement holds to each of these ideas.

Origins of the Movement

- Some say the Word-Faith movement emerged exclusively from metaphysical groups.
- Some say it is rooted entirely in the early faith healing following Azusa Street revival.
- Others say both.



Phineas Quimby

I. The Role of E. W. Kenyon

- Kenyon is the grandfather of the Word-Faith movement.
- He is responsible for some of its doctrines and terminology.
- Kenyon's doctrines included:
 - God created the world through His faith;
 - At the Fall, humans took on Satan's nature;
 - Jesus died spiritually (taking on Satan's nature);
 - We can use positive confession to bring about health and wealth.



E. W. Kenyon

II. WF Goes Far Beyond Kenyon

- Kenyon did not believe God has a body.
- Kenyon did not speak of humans as little gods.
- Kenyon's views on prosperity were more moderate.



Main Leaders

Founders: E.W. Kenyon. Later Kenneth Hagin.

Today: Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, Joel Osteen, T.D. Jakes, John Hagee, Creflo Dollar, Paula White, Joyce Meyer, and Juanita Bynum are a few of the leading televangelists who have commercialized the teaching of the prosperity gospel in our day. For decades, these men and women have broadcast a false gospel over the radio and on television channels such as the Trinity Broadcast Network (TBN). In this way, they have exported their false teaching to Africa, South America, and Asia as well.

III. The Role of Kenneth Hagin

- If Kenyon was the grandfather of the Word-Faith movement, Hagin is its father.
- Claimed to be the teacher and prophet to the church for the last revival prior to the Second Coming.
- Claimed new revelations from God, but actually plagiarized from Kenyon.



I. Word-Faith (“anointed”) leaders claim they should not be publicly criticized.

- **Psalm 105:15:** “Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm.”
- Claim that people can get cancer if they criticize them.
- **Kenneth Copeland:** “Several people that I know had criticized and called that faith bunch out of Tulsa a cult. And some of ‘em are dead right today in an early grave because of it, and there’s more than one of them got cancer.”



II. Reason does not play a major role.

- Humans are trichotomous — body, soul, spirit.
- Spirit =
 - the real person,
 - created in God's image,
 - communicates with God, not mind.
 - is to rule the body through the soul (which is the seat of reason).
- Since reason is affiliated with the soul, this means spirit is to rule over reason.
- Thus, we are not to listen to reason ("I feel sick and maybe should see a doctor.")
- We are not to listen to the body (i.e., bodily symptoms).
- We should listen only to our spirit (which confesses healing) and ignore reason and the body (which confesses doubts and symptoms).
- (This is key to WF theology.)



III. God has a physical body.

- Hagin and Copeland both teach this.
- Note Isaiah 40:12: "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?"



IV. God is a faith being.

- Faith is a power or force activated through the agency of the spoken word.
- God is like a man in that he is a being of faith.
- He created the world by faith (speaking words of faith).
- He accomplishes all his works by faith.
- He speaks words of faith to bring about change.
- Hebrews 11:3 — “By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”
- WF proponents say faith is the means God used to create the universe.
- God created the universe utilizing faith.

V. Man was created as an exact duplicate of God.

Human beings are little gods.

- Humans exist in God's class, though on smaller scale (little g).
- WF proponents sometimes appeal to John 10:34 in support of this.
- Jesus said, "Ye are gods" (John 10:34).
- We were created in God's image, which means we exist in God's class (Genesis 1:26-27).
 - "Image" or "likeness" = "an exact duplication in kind" (Jerry Savelle).
 - Man "was created on terms of equality with God, and he could stand in God's presence without any consciousness of inferiority... God has made us as much like himself as possible.. He made us in the same class of being that He is himself" (Kenneth Hagin).
- We are the same kind of being as God, though on a smaller scale.
- Our potential as little gods, however, was thwarted by the Fall.
- Through Jesus, we are restored.



VI. At the Fall, man committed high treason against God and took on the nature of Satan.

- Adam = original god of this world.
- Had authority to rule by speaking words.
- Fell into sin. Committed high treason against God.
- Gave legal dominion to Satan. Satan became "God of this world."
- Christ's suffering in hell overcame Satan. Restored man as "little gods."



VII. Jesus was brought into the world via positive confession in order to solve man's dilemma.

Kenneth Copeland: "Before Jesus came to the earth, God spoke His Word and then spoke His Word again. How many times did He say the Messiah was coming? It was prophesied over hundreds, even thousands, of years. He kept saying, 'He is coming. He is coming.' The circumstances in the earth made it look as if there was no way He could accomplish it; but He just kept saying it. He would not be moved by what He saw.... God would not relent."



VIII. When Jesus died, He died physically and spiritually (which means Jesus took upon Himself the nature of Satan).

- Man = created as little gods.
- Man forfeited this at the Fall and took on Satan's nature.
- To correct this situation, Jesus came, died spiritually (taking on Satan's nature), suffered in hell, was born again (with the nature of God), rose from the dead, and sent the Holy Spirit.
- Hence, the incarnation can be duplicated in believers (we can be "little gods").
- 2 Cor. 5:21: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us [TAKING ON THE NATURE OF SATAN], so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."
- Isaiah 53:9 — "He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth."
- Death = plural. Was to die 2 deaths — physical and spiritual.
- Spiritual death involved Jesus taking on the nature of Satan, with the implication that He gave up the nature of God.
- Charles Capps: "The sinless Son of God became as a serpent."



IX. Jesus accomplished our redemption in hell.

- Frederick Price said Satan and the demons of hell “threw a net over Jesus and they dragged him down to the very pit of hell itself to serve our sentence.”
- Jan Crouch says the burnt offerings in the Old Testament are types of Christ.



X. Jesus was born again in hell.

- **Charles Capps** says that “if there's any part of hell Jesus did not suffer, you'll have to suffer it. But, thank God, Jesus suffered it all for you.” Jesus was then born again in hell, and is thus called the “firstborn from the dead.”
- **Kenneth Copeland** says Jesus’ “twisted, death-wracked spirit began to fill out and come back to life.... He was literally being reborn before the devil’s very eyes.... He whipped the devil in his own backyard.”



XI. As a result of what Christ accomplished for us, Christians are the on-going incarnation of Jesus Christ. They are truly “little gods.”

- Church = body of Christ.
- Since the head (Christ) and the body (the church) are in complete unity, members of the church are ongoing incarnations of God.
- Christians are thus extensions of Christ.
- Frederick Price: “God can’t do anything in this earth realm except that we, the body of Christ, allow Him to do.”



XII. Human beings can have God's kind of faith and call things into being.

- Mark 11:22: "Have faith in God," Jesus answered.
- Word-Faith proponents translate this as, "Have the faith of God."
- WF proponents argue "God" is a subjective genitive, meaning God is the subject who himself has faith.
- So the verse would be translated, "Have the faith of God" (i.e., you humans should have God's kind of faith").
- Hence, we, too, can use the spoken word to activate the force of faith in our lives.



XIII. The key to success in life is positive confession.

- Positive confession stresses the inherent power of words and thoughts.
- Each person predestines his own future by what he says verbally and by how well he uses spiritual laws.
- This is quite similar to the "Law of Attraction" in the New Thought Movement.
- T.D. Jakes: "What do you want? Name it, baby, name it.... Declare it! Speak it! Confess it! Get your list out!"
- Joel Osteen: "Your words have enormous creative power. The moment you speak something out, you give birth to it."



XIV. Physical healing is guaranteed in the atonement.

- Isaiah 53:4-5: "By his wounds we are healed."
- Believers should never be sick.
- It is up to each individual believer to appropriate the guaranteed healing that has been made available.
- There are unclaimed organs and limbs in a warehouse in heaven.
- If the believer has sin or unbelief, the available healing is prevented.
- If the believer listens to the body (symptoms) instead of the spirit (which is supposed to rule over body and soul), healing is prevented.



XV. God desires all of His children to prosper and be wealthy.

• 2 Corinthians 8:9: "...he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."

• John 16:24: "Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."

• Joshua 1:8: "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."

• 3 John 2: "I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you..."

• The Hundredfold Returns (Mark 10:29-30).



I. Word-Faith leaders are not beyond criticism.

- False doctrine that is publicly proclaimed should be publicly confronted.
- Paul publicly confronted Peter when his actions compromised the liberty of the gospel (Gal. 2:11-14).
- Paul publicly dealt with Hymenaeus and Alexander regarding their blasphemy (1 Tim. 1:20).
- He publicly dealt with Alexander the coppersmith for his harmful activities (2 Tim. 4:14).



II. Reason plays a central role.

- God created us as rational creatures in His image (Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10).
- God urges, "Come now, let us reason" (Isaiah 1:18; 43:26).
- Jesus confounded His critics with logic (Mark 11:29-33).
- Jesus commanded, "You shall love the Lord... with all your mind" (Matt. 22:37).
- The apostle Paul reasoned with Jews and Gentiles (Acts 17:2; 18:4,19).
- Peter commanded, "be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15).
- Overseers are urged to be able "to refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9).
- Note: One cannot argue against reason without using reason.



III. God is not a physical being.

- John 4:24: God is by nature spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.
- Luke 24:39 tells us that a spirit does not have flesh and bones.
- Conclusion: Since God is spirit, He does not have flesh and bones.
- "Hand-span" in Isaiah 40:12 = anthropomorphism.
- God is not a man (Hos. 11:9) and has no form (Deut. 4:12).

IV. God is not a faith being.

- The very idea that God exercises faith has dire implications.
- It implies that God is bound by the constraints of time and does not see or know the future until it has happened to Him
- It implies that God has hopes that He is seeking to bring about by faith.
- BE CLEAR: There is a huge difference between God and a finite human being.
 - God gets what He wants because He is God, not because He speaks words of faith.
 - Further, let us note that God gets what He wants simply by willing it; He does not need to verbalize it.

V. Man was not created as a duplicate of God.

- The "Image of God" (Genesis 1:26-27) does not refer to deity.
 - Human beings share, though imperfectly and finitely, in God's communicable attributes such as life, personality, truth, rationality, wisdom, love, holiness, and justice.
 - There is only one God (Deut. 6:4).
 - The Bible rejects polytheism (see incomparability of Yahweh in Torah).
 - Man's ignorance of his deity proves he is not deity.
 - The attributes of God and humans are completely different:
- All-knowing / Limited.
 - All-powerful / Weak.
 - Everywhere-present / One place at a time.
 - Holy / Unrighteous.
 - Eternal / Born at point in time.
 - Truth / Deceitful.
 - Justice / Lawless.
 - Love / Full of vices.
 - If man is a god, one could never tell it by his attributes!

VI. At the fall, man did not take on the nature of Satan.

2 Cor. 5:21

- "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."
- Christ did not take on the nature of Satan, for Christ as God is immutable, and cannot change in His divine nature (Hebrews 13:8; cf. Malachi 3:6).
- **Norman Geisler:** Regarding Jesus being "made to be sin,"
 - Jesus was always without sin actually.
 - but He was made to be sin for us putatively.
 - while Jesus never committed a sin personally.
 - He was made to be sin for us substitutionally.

Isaiah 53:9

- "He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth." (death - plural)
- In the Hebrew language, a plural is often used to intensify the meaning of a single word.
- The Hebrew word for death in Isaiah 53:9 is what Hebrew grammarians call a plural of intensity.
- This kind of plural indicates not that there is more than one death in view but rather that the one death spoken of (a physical death) is particularly intense in terms of violence.
- This verse cannot be cited to support the view that Jesus died twice — both physically and spiritually — on the cross.

VII. Jesus attained our redemption at the cross, not in hell.

- 1 Peter 1:18-19: "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect."
- Ephesians 1:7: "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace."
- Rev. 1:5: "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood."
- At the cross, Jesus said "It is finished" (John 19:30).



VIII. Christians are not the ongoing incarnation of Jesus Christ.

- Jesus was not a prototype. (*monogenes*)
- Jesus = single divine Messiah. (100's of prophecies)
- Humans who are indwelt by the Spirit, and who are part of the body of Christ, DO NOT experience an ontological change.
- Body of Christ = symbol of the church.
- Finite humans remain finite, even after being indwelt by the spirit, and become a part of the body of Christ.

IX. Christians do not have the God kind of faith.

Mark 11:22: "Have faith in God."

Word-Faith View

- "God" = **subjective genitive**.
- God is the subject who himself has faith.
- Translated: "Have the faith of God" (i.e., you humans should have God's kind of faith").
- Hence, we, too, can use the spoken word to activate the force of faith in our lives.

Correct View

- "God" = **objective genitive**.
- God is the object of faith.
- Translated: "Have faith in God" (i.e., you humans should place your faith in God alone).
- Greek grammarians agree this is an objective genitive.

X. Positive confession is not a biblical concept.

- Some people mail in their money to Word-Faith TV shows, hoping for some miracle money from their "positive confession," only to go bankrupt.
- Some people remain unhealed of their cancer, and feel depression, guilt, and disillusionment for their apparent lack of skill in positive confession.
- Some people, when a loved one dies, wonder whether things might have been different if only they had properly applied the principles of positive confession.
- Meanwhile, Word-Faith teachers enjoy the cash that has been sent in to their ministries.
- Woe unto them!

Larry Parker: "We Let Our Son Die"



XI. Healing is not guaranteed in the atonement.

- Our bodies = perishable and weak (1 Cor. 15:42-44).
- Our "outer man is decaying" (2 Cor. 4:16).
- Our resurrection bodies will represent the end of such suffering (1 Cor. 15:51-55).
- The apostle Paul couldn't heal Timothy's stomach problem (1 Timothy 5:23)
 - nor could he heal Trophimus at Miletus (2 Timothy 4:20)
 - or Epaphroditus (Philippians 3:25-27).
- Paul spoke of "a bodily illness" he had (Galatians 4:13-15).
- He also suffered a "thorn in the flesh" which God allowed him to retain (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).
- God certainly allowed Job to go through a time of physical suffering (Job 1—2).
- Isaiah 53:4-5: "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed."
- Healing = spiritual.

XII. The prosperity gospel is an unbiblical gospel.

- 2 Corinthians 8:9 — "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." "Become rich" = spiritual prosperity.
- John 16:24 — "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."
 - Conditions: John 15:7 — "Remain in me..."
 - 1 John 3:22 — "Obey his commands..."
 - 1 John 5:14 — Ask "according to his will."
- Joshua 1:8 — "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." (Military)
- 3 John 2 — "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." (Standard greeting.)
- The Hundredfold Return (Mark 10:30)

XIII. The Bible provides many key insights on the desire for health and wealth.

- God does not condemn riches *per se*, but He does condemn a love of riches (see Luke 16:13; 1 Timothy 6:10; Hebrews 13:5).
- 1 Tim. 6:9: "People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction."
- Luke 12:15: "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."
- Matthew 6:19-20: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Comparison

	Prosperity Gospel	Christian
Jesus Atoning Death	Jesus purchased all the benefits of salvation for this life. Jesus purchased complete physical healing for His people in this life through His death on the cross. Jesus died to take away every sickness in this life and to atone for the “sin” of financial poverty.	God calls people to come to Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus died to atone for the sins of His people (Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). The focus is never on physical, financial, or material prosperity in this life. Believers will come to enjoy the full benefits of the death of Christ only in the resurrection on the last day.

Comparison

	Prosperity Gospel	Christian
Abrahamic Covenant Blessing	<p>A present-day inheritance. In the Abrahamic covenant, God promised a vast material and financial inheritance for believers in this life. If a person believes in Jesus, he will inherit great possessions and tangible blessings in this life.</p>	<p>God promised Abraham that he would inherit the world (Rom. 4:13). This promise was fulfilled in the person and work of the Son of Abraham, Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:16). Everyone who believes in Jesus Christ is a son or daughter of Abraham and coheir of the inheritance promised to him (Gal. 3:29). By the same faith Abraham exercised, we receive the blessings of salvation—justification, adoption, the promised Holy Spirit, and the guarantee of the everlasting inheritance (Gal. 3:7–9). Believers will not fully possess the inheritance until the resurrection on the last day (Heb. 11:39–40; 13:14).</p>

Comparison

	Prosperity Gospel	Christian
Financial Giving	Give to get. Prosperity gospel preachers teach their followers that the way to gain riches is to give more money to the kingdom, especially by giving to their churches and ministries. The quantity of material and financial prosperity one expects to gain is in proportion to what one gives.	Believers have the duty and privilege of giving generously to the work of God's kingdom in this life. God makes His grace abound toward His people when they give generously so that they will be equipped to continue giving generously (2 Cor. 9:8–11). Scripture never teaches us to give in order to gain and lay up treasure for ourselves.

Comparison

	Prosperity Gospel	Christian
Financial Giving	<p>“Name it and claim it.” Faith and prayer empower people to lay hold of physical and material blessings in this life. Certain leaders in this movement have popularized the term <i>Word of Faith</i> to capture the essence of their teaching. Accordingly, if someone exercises enough faith, he will no longer have to be subject to the crippling effects of sickness and disease. If individuals continue to suffer afflictions or poverty, it is due to their lack of personal faith. When we pray in faith, we compel God to make us prosperous, particularly when we declare that we already possess the desired blessing. Likewise, some teachers discourage their followers from speaking negative words, lest they bring negative things into being.</p>	<p>The Apostle Paul prayed fervently to the Lord for personal healing, only to have Jesus tell him, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12:7–9). This was not a lack of faith on Paul’s part. God has not promised complete healing in this life. He promises complete healing for individuals only in the resurrection on the last day.</p>

Biblical Response

Luke 12:15

But He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one is affluent does his life consist of his possessions.”

There will be suffering in this life:

Matthew 5:10

“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

1 Peter 3:14

But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE IN DREAD,

Biblical Response

Sometimes you will experience suffering and sometimes your life will have blessings:

Philippians 4:12

I know how to get along with little, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every *circumstance* I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

Psalms 62:10

Do not trust in oppression, And do not vainly rely on robbery; If wealth increases, do not set *your heart on it*.

1 Timothy 6:17

Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to set their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

The only one of Jesus' disciples to fall away was himself a lover of money (John 12:6).

Biblical Response

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Biblical Response

Isaiah 53:5 - The entire Chapter 53 is in regards to the Messiah who will bear our sins and rise from the dead to see his offspring and people will prosper spiritually by the atoning death. He will reign forever.

John 10:10 - The abundant life Jesus brings is not money. This verse is comparing Satan who is darkness and seeks to kill and destroy with Jesus who brings light and promise of eternal salvation (c.f. John 1:4- "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men")

Almost every Disciple died as a Martyr. They suffered for Jesus and did not enjoy a prosperous financial life. The early church is full of Martyrs who suffered greatly and died for their beliefs. Entire books of the New testament are written to suffering Christians to strengthen them during suffering.

Philippian 1:29

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer on His behalf,

We seek the eternal blessing and hope (Hebrews 13:14; 1 Peter 3:4).

Biblical Response

Paul had great faith and prayed to relieve his suffering but God said:

2 Corinthians 12:7-9

“So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelation, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Jesus said we will have hardship and not financial blessings

John 16:33

“These things I have spoken to you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

John 16:23-24.

“In that day, you will not question me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in my name, He will give it to you. Until now, you have asked for nothing in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.”

This is not a verse to ask for your own personal gain!

This is what we pray for:

“In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:26-28, NASB)