

"I will set a Plumbline among my people..." Amos 7:8



The Plumbline

Assessing Current Teachings, Issues and Events with Scripture

The Absurd is Flooding into Generic Evangelical Churches

To illustrate this I draw attention to a real but an unnamed historical Pentecostal family tree Sunday school class. This class meets in a historic church in the USA and is filled with elderly believers. These believers have all been soundly converted from theologically dead mainline churches that for decades have not preached the gospel and also some from a Roman Catholic upbringing. These elderly saints all have the scars and experience to prove their hard won evangelical status. But with the onrush of postmodern Christianity via the evangelical media this class also exhibits the "sloppy agape" of the postmodern evangelical church. But the absurdity comes in by off the cuff remarks in this class that betray the absurdity of false prophecies now being accepted without even a second thought or concern. A class member talking about most any subject will interject that they heard a proven a false prophet say this or that on TV. This reveals that a wide range of prophetic voices are being accepted and consumed by these evangelical veterans, accepting words supposedly from the Lord Himself that have NO biblical reference point whatsoever. Only someone who follows the TV scene would even know who these personages are let alone their steady stream of imaginary false prophecies. One gray haired lady simply dropped the name of prophet Kim Clement, a regular prophetic voice on TBN. Kim Clement is known as the singing prophet and often singing his prophecies. Bill Hamon laid hands on him to become a prophet back in 1983. Bill Hamon, by the way, is known as the premier Latter Rain prophet. Hamon possesses years of notebooks of his personal prophecies that forms the basis of his Latter Rain ministry. Recently Charisma magazine honored Hamon as one of the 40 most influential persons in Pentecostal history. Kim Clement's recent prophesy about Pope Francis deserves our attention: Clement asserts:

"I was in a state of "ecstatic perception" caught in prophetic elevation and during this moment I caught a glimpse of religious garments and oil being poured on them. Then I saw Pope Francis... I speak of the one who calls himself St. Francis of Assisi. The Spirit spoke to him to come and stand at the head. This man has been appointed to join the hearts of the Protestant faith and the Catholic (faith)...They will try to kill him 3 times and poison him but his voice will not be stopped, says the Lord."

Its just all cut and dried for them and apparently consulting these false prophets on TV is just as normal as checking the weather forecast. This shows that false words of Jesus are continuing to be placed in the center of the heartland of the pan-evangelical church.

Another elderly lady speaking about another subject all together then just casually drops the name Bill Johnson whom she said she is watching daily on TV and also she mentions Heidi Baker as well. Indeed, Bill Johnson and his companions provide a steady diet of new revelations on the net. Their latest thoughts are found in a book called: "*The Physics of Heaven*." Space does not allow for all the revelation knowledge that surrounds Bill Johnson and those who minister with him. Notably, Jonathan Welton who wrote a chapter in the above mentioned book presented himself as a "seer" prophet obviously on a par with the Old Testament "seer prophets." Bill Johnson was honored to be on the steering committee and a participant at the international gathering of world Pentecostals called Empower 21 held this year in Jerusalem on Pentecost. Heidi Baker participates in these conferences and is involved in the full panoply of revelations that are beyond scripture. Bill Johnson's view of scripture may give us a clue as to how he ended up being attracted to extra-biblical prophesy. According to Johnson:

"None of us has a full grasp of Scripture, but we have the Holy Spirit. He is our common denominator who will always lead us into truth. But to follow him we must be willing to go off the map – to go beyond what we know." (*The Physics of Heaven*, Kindle location: 3920.) Co-author Elynn Davis of Bill Johnsons book (*Physics of Heaven*) and his personal secretary writes in the book: "It wasn't that I wanted to become a New Ager, I just wanted to find out if maybe they had uncovered some truths the church hadn't." (*Kindle edition p.392*). Its as if the new Christians in Acts 19 who burned their occult books checked out their occult materials to see if there was good revelation contained in them.

Bill Johnson and Heidi Baker have already become accepted furniture in house of the Lord. These TV prophetic oracles are no longer the camel getting its nose under the tent but these camels apparently have the run of the tent.

Apparently, Big Tent evangelicalism has no apparent concern for supposed false words of Jesus being accepted as a normal diet for the church. If the historic elders have long since accepted a wide range of current prophetic words supposedly spoken by Jesus himself, what chance is there in the long run for the pizza and fun youth groups. Once they are old enough they will just go with the flow as expected.

Broadly speaking a few decades ago the battle for an inerrant scripture was won especially within the Southern Baptist Convention. But now the greater concern is the sufficiency and uniqueness of scripture.

The previous decades have done their work. The church has now apparently accepted the idea that God continues to speak verbally and currently reveals Himself directly to His church. But this leaves us with an unavoidable problem. Should not these words of Jesus if truly His words be recorded and decimated to the church.? How could some of the words of Jesus be less authoritative than any other words of Jesus. But if we accept these words as coming directly from the Lord himself and still hold to a closed canon (the 66 books of the bible) then no matter what we say this denigrates the bible and the canon of scripture accepted as the word of God for centuries. The scriptures need further editions with new content and new biblical authors.

At the recent attempted replay of Pentecost in Jerusalem at Empower 21 not only was apostle Bill Johnson (Word-Faith pastor who avoids that title, he prefers apostle) was honored along with Kenneth Copeland. Copeland is the defacto leader of the Word-Faith movement. Recently, Copeland and over a thousand Word-Faith pastors were gathered in a yearly conference and received a direct communication from the Vicar of Christ upon the earth direct from the Vatican, non other than Pope Francis. In this direct smart phone projection of Francis from the The new Pope called upon the charismatic communion to come into fellowship with the Vatican. Kenneth Copeland positively returned the smart phone communication to the pontiff and the over one thousand word faith pastors in attendance cheered together. But the point here about Kenneth Copeland is that as a traditional Word-Faith teacher, he lives and breaths what they call "revelation knowledge". This "revelation knowledge" was bequeathed to him by non other than Kenneth Hagin the originator of Word-Faith teaching. Revelation knowledge simply means that one can receive and live daily with a continual stream of the extra-biblical words of Jesus. Kenneth Copeland is openly the leader of the Word-Faith churches having succeeded Kenneth Hagin. Copeland is now apparently reconciled to the Pope.

Among the false direct words and revelation knowledge supposedly from Jesus given to Copland is one oracle that is especially alarming. I quote Ken Copeland.

"Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of thinking you're God... They spoke that way of Me, should they not speak that way of you?...The more you get to be like Me, the more they're going to think that way of you. They crucified me for claiming that I was God. But I didn't claim I was God; I just claimed I walked with Him and that He was in Me. Hallelujah. That's what your doing." (Voice of Victory, *Take Time to Pray*, Feb.1987, p.9.)

2Timothy3:16f establishes that "scripture is "God-Breathed" It affirms that "God-Breathed" Scripture is profitable for teaching, for reproof, correction and training in righteousness. This passage finally asserts that Scripture adequately equips the man of God for every good work. The sufficiency of scripture is here established. Consequently, the Copelands and Clements are clearly deemed not only unnecessary, but also nothing but vacuous imitational false prophets. John MacArthur has sounded the warning: "Christians must not play fast and loose with the issues of inspiration and revelation. An accurate understanding of these doctrines is essential for distinguishing the voice of God and the human voice... It has always been important to be able to separate God's Word from that which is false...that the whole church might have a clear standard." (MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, p. 76).

Larry DeBruyn speaks plainly: "If the Bible is no longer considered sufficient, the coming of 'new revelations' raises the following conundrum. I repeat it.

"If added revelations repeat what is in the Bible, they are **unnecessary**. If new revelations contradict the word of God, they are **heresy**. And if they **supplement** God's word, the new revelations imply the Scripture is **insufficient**. Proverbs 30:6 warns 'Add thou not unto His [God's] word lest He [God] reprove you and you be found a liar.'" (Larry DeBruyn, *The Holy Spirit and Holy Scripture*, guardinghisflock.com).

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