

# Kenneth Copeland

## *General Teachings/Activities*

- [Tongues-speaking charismatic](#) Kenneth Copeland is considered to be the most prosperous and well-known in the "[Word-Faith](#)"/"[Positive Confession](#)" movement. His television program is carried nationwide on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, and he is the author of numerous charismatic-oriented books and articles. Copeland's daily *Believers' Voice of Victory* television broadcast is available to more than 76 million households on nearly 700 stations in the United States. An estimated 82 million households are able to receive the Sunday broadcast over more than 600 stations, and the broadcast can be seen on about 135 International stations. Copeland also publishes the monthly *Believer's Voice of Victory* magazine, and the bimonthly *Shout! The Voice of Victory for Kids* magazine.

In his *Believer's Voice of Victory* magazine, Copeland teaches the following heresies: "God has never used sickness to discipline His children" (9/89); "AIDS is 'absolutely not' God's way of punishing immoral people" (11/87); Jesus didn't claim to be God when He lived on earth (8/88); the [New Age](#)/occult techniques of [positive imaging and visualization](#) are for God's people today (9/88); God intends for His people to be united, and, "That union won't be based on doctrine" (12/88); healing is for every believer (2/93); and [tongues](#) are for the entire Body of Christ (1/93). Copeland also says: "It would have been impossible for Jesus to have been poor!" (9/90, *Charisma*). (Reported in the 2/15/93, [Calvary Contender](#).)

- As the name "Word-Faith" implies, this movement teaches that faith is a matter of what we *say* more than whom we trust or what truths we embrace and affirm in our hearts. A favorite term in the Word-Faith movement is "positive confession." It refers to the Word-Faith teaching that words have creative power. What you *say*, Word-Faith teachers claim, determines everything that happens to you. Your "confessions," that is, the things you say -- especially the favors you [demand](#) of God - - must all be stated positively and without wavering. Then God is [required](#) to answer (*Charismatic Chaos*, p. 281). Word-Faith believers view their positive confessions as an incantation by which they can conjure up *anything* they desire: "Believe it in your heart; say it with your mouth. That is the principle of faith. *You can have what you say*" (*Charismatic Chaos*, p. 285).

- Word-Faith is the fastest-growing movement within the professing church. It has involved two distinct but closely related factions: the [Peale/Schuller](#) Positive/Possibility thinkers, with their roots in New Thought, and the [Hagin](#)/Copeland Positive Confession and Word-Faith groups, which have their roots in E.W. Kenyon, William Branham, and the Manifest Sons of God/Latter Rain Movement. In Kenneth Hagin's book, *Having Faith in Your Faith* (Copeland confesses that Hagin's tapes and books revolutionized his ministry), Hagin teaches that anyone can develop universal "laws of faith" to get what he wants. Hagin teaches that for a pastor or *anyone* to drive a Chevrolet instead of a luxury car isn't "being humble, that's being ignorant" of God's "law of prosperity" that works for

"whoever you are," saint or sinner. The battle-cry of the Positive Confession (PC) movement is: "Have faith in your faith." This is a far cry from what Jesus taught: "Have faith in God" (*Charismatic Chaos*, p. 281). (Copeland's book, *The Laws of Prosperity*, teaches these same concepts.)

This is at the heart of the PC movement today, also known as the "name-it-and-claim-it" gospel. The PC movement is a charismatic form of [Christian Science](#). This can be substantiated by simply comparing the similarities in their common beliefs. PC is basically warmed-over New Thought dressed in evangelical/charismatic language. (Other well-known PC'ers besides the "father" of the movement, Kenneth Hagin, and Copeland, his most successful protégé, are Charles Capps, Frederick K.C. Price, Robert Tilton, and [David \(Paul\) Yonggi Cho](#). Many of them are graduates of Hagin's Rhema Bible Training Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma.)

- Copeland's teaching on healing is a particularly destructive lie -- in the 2/93 issue of *Believer's Voice of Victory*, Copeland says that every Christian is guaranteed physical healing and financial prosperity. Multitudes of those who have believed the charismatic lies about healing in the Atonement have become confused and disappointed. Many have become bitter against God because God did not do what they were convinced He had promised to do. The problem with Copeland's teachings is that God has **not** promised health and prosperity to His people in this present world. Nevertheless, Copeland speaks disparagingly of Christians who "are still living in sickness, bondage, and lack." Yet this "sickness, bondage, and lack" is the epitaph of a great many of God's choicest saints.

- Copeland is perhaps the best known proponent of the charismatic's "little gods" teaching (see below). He says Jesus told him:

"Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of thinking you are God ... They crucified Me for claiming I was God. I didn't claim that I was God; I just claimed that I walked with Him and that He was in Me. Hallelujah! That's what you're doing ..." ("Take Time to Pray," *Believer's Voice of Victory*, 2/87, p. 9).

Copeland thus denies the uniqueness of Christ, saying that Christ was **not** God, only that He walked closely with God. And as Copeland says, so does he! Copeland, thereby, places himself on the same level as Jesus Christ, willing to blur the distinction between the will of God and the will of Copeland. Copeland seems to think that he and Jesus have about the same authority for the believer, and sounds like New Ager Shirley MacClaine when he says:

"You're all God. You don't have a God living in you; you *are* one! ... When I read in the Bible where God tells Moses, 'I AM,' I say, 'Yah, I am too!'" ("The Force of Love," Tape BBC-56).

- Copeland teaches that Adam was "created in the god class"; i.e., he was a reproduction of God:

"He was not *subordinate* to God ... [but] was walking as a god with the authority of a god. ... What he said went. What he did, counted. [And when he] bowed his knee to Satan and put Satan up above him, then there wasn't anything God could do about it, because a *god* had placed [Satan] there" ("The Force of Love," tape #02-0028).

When Adam committed high treason, according to Copeland, even though "created in the god class," he fell below the god class, but on the cross, Jesus won the right for believers to be born again back into the "god class" (see below). Jesus' deity, according to Copeland, encompasses "healing, deliverance, financial prosperity, mental prosperity, physical prosperity, and family prosperity." And because believers are now back in the "god class," they are guaranteed those blessings here and now (*Charismatic Chaos*, p. 272).

- Copeland teaches, as do all the Word-Faith teachers, that "Jesus Died Spiritually" (JDS). What makes the Word-Faith teachers' version of JDS, heresy (if not blasphemy), is their teaching that our redemption comes **not** from Christ's death upon the cross, but from His being tortured by Satan in hell for three days and nights! Copeland has, thus, embraced a heresy known as the "Ransom theory of the atonement." It is the view that Christ's death was a ransom paid to Satan to settle the legal claim the devil had on the human race because of Adam's sin. But that view contradicts the clear Biblical teaching that Christ's death was a sacrifice offered to God, not to Satan (Eph. 5:2) (*Charismatic Chaos*, p. 278). Copeland, for example, says:

"He allowed the devil to drag Him into the depths of hell as if He were the most wicked sinner who ever lived ... Every demon in hell came down on Him to annihilate Him ... [They] tortured Him beyond anything that anybody has ever conceived ... In a thunder of spiritual force, the voice of God spoke to the death-whipped, broken, punished spirit of Jesus ... [in] the pit of destruction, and charged the spirit of Jesus with resurrection power! Suddenly His 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 began to flex His spiritual muscles ... Jesus Christ dragged Satan up and down the halls of hell ... Jesus ... was raised up a born-again man ... The day I realized that a born-again man had defeated Satan, hell, and death, I got so excited ... !" ("The Price of it All," *Believer's Voice of Victory*, September 1991, p. 4).

It is both fanciful nonsense and heretical to teach that our redemption comes through Satan torturing Jesus in hell. That would make Satan our co-redeemer. If he didn't torture Jesus enough, we wouldn't be saved -- and if he did, do we thank Satan? Incredible! Moreover, Satan isn't even the proprietor of hell. He hasn't even been there yet. Nor will Satan torture the damned but will himself be tortured with "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41) when death and hell have been "cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14).

Before He died, Jesus cried in triumph, "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30), indicating that our redemption has been accomplished *on the Cross*. Christ told the thief on the cross who believed in Him, "*Today* shalt thou be with me in *paradise*" (Lk. 23:43), *not in hell!* He

said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:46). Yet Hagin, Copeland, *et al.*, say He ended up, instead, in the hands of Satan in the depths of hell! What blasphemy! (5/93, *Berean Call*).

- Word-Faith teachers owe their ancestry to groups like Christian Science, Swedenborgianism, Theosophy, Science of Mind, and New Thought -- not to classical [Pentecostalism](#). It reveals that at their very core, Word-Faith teachings are corrupt. Their undeniable derivation is cultish, not Christian. The sad truth is that the gospel proclaimed by the Word-Faith movement is not the gospel of the New Testament. Word-Faith doctrine is a mongrel system, a blend of mysticism, dualism, and gnosticism that borrows generously from the teachings of the metaphysical cults. The Word-Faith movement may be the most dangerous false system that has grown out of the charismatic movement so far, because so many charismatics are unsure of the finality of Scripture (*Charismatic Chaos*, p. 290).

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## Other Quotes Illustrating Kenneth Copeland's Heretical Teachings

### **That Adam was God manifest in the flesh.**

"God's reason for creating Adam was His desire to reproduce Himself. I mean a reproduction of Himself, and in the Garden of Eden He did just that. He was not a little like God. He was not almost like God. He was not subordinate to God even. ... Adam is as much like God as you could get, just the same as Jesus. ... Adam, in the Garden of Eden, was God manifested in the flesh." (*Following the Faith of Abraham I*, 1989 audiotape, #01-3001, side 1)

### **God is the greatest failure in the Universe.**

"I was shocked when I found out who the biggest failure in the Bible actually is. ... The biggest one is God. ... I mean, He lost His top-ranking, most anointed angel; the first man He ever created; the first woman He ever created; the whole earth and all the Fullness therein; a third of the angels, at least—that's a big loss, man ... Now, the reason you don't think of God as a failure is He never said He's a failure. And you're not a failure till you say you're one." (Praise-a-Thon program on TBN [April 1988] )

### **God lives on a mother planet**

"Heaven has a north and a south and an east and a west. Consequently, it must be a planet." (*Spirit, Soul and Body I*, 1985 audiotape #01-0601, side 1)

"You don't think earth was first, do you? Huh? Well, you don't think that God made man in His image, and then made earth in some other image? There is not anything under this whole sun that's new. Are you hearing what I'm saying? This is all a copy. It's a copy of home. It's a copy of the Mother Planet. Where God lives, He made a little one just like

His and put us on it.” (*Following the Faith of Abraham I*, 1989 audiotope, #01-3001, side 1)

**The death of Jesus on the Cross did not pay the price for sins.**

“It wasn’t the physical death on the cross that paid the price for sin ... anybody could do that.” (*What Satan Saw on the Day of Pentecost*)

“Every prophet that walked the face of the earth under the Abrahamic covenant could have paid the price if it were a physical death only” “When He said ‘It is finished’ on that cross, He was not speaking of the plan of redemption. The plan of redemption had just begun; there were still three days and three nights to be gone through.” “[Jesus] accepted the sin nature of Satan in His own Spirit, and at the moment that He did so, He cried ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’.” “He [Jesus] was down in that pit and there he suffered the punishment for three horrible days and nights for Adam’s treason ... There is a new birth takes place in the very depths of the earth, when the command of God says ‘That’s enough, loose him and let him go.’” (*What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*)

**Jesus was raped by homosexual Roman soldiers every way possible.**

“Let me tell you something folks. Anybody in here that’s ever been sexually abused, listen to me right now. Listen to me very carefully. The Bible’s very careful about the way it says these things. But down there in that dungeon, Romans, ungodly men, ungodly men, put Him (Jesus) to every kind of abuse that you can think of. There is no sin that Jesus didn’t bare. There is no thing, there is no such thing as a sexual abuse on somebody that Jesus doesn’t know firsthand what it’s all about. He’s been where you are. I don’t care what you’ve been through, Jesus has been through it. And everything’s done to him that we couldn’t even speak of.” (*The Resurrection Truth*)

**God and Adam are the same size.**

“God spoke Adam into existence in authority with words. These words struck Adam’s body in the face. His body and God’s were exactly the same size.” (Holy Bible, Kenneth Copeland Reference Edition 1991, p. 45)

God is “a being that is very uncanny the way He’s very much like you and me. A being that stands somewhere around 6’-2”, 6’-3”, that weighs somewhere in the neighborhood of a couple of hundred pounds, little better, [and] has a [hand] span of nine inches across.” (*Spirit, Soul and Body I*, 1985, audiotope #01-0601, side 1)

“[Adam] was the copy, looked just like [God]. If you stood Adam upside God, they look just exactly alike. If you stood Jesus and Adam side-by-side, they would look and sound exactly alike.” (*Authority of the Believer IV*, 1987, audiotope #01-0304, side 1)

**God has no right to the earth at all; He needs an invitation.**

“God had no avenue of lasting faith or moving in the earth. He had to have covenant with somebody. ... He had to be invited in, in other words, or He couldn’t come. God is on the outside looking in. In order to have any say so in the earth, He’s going to have to be in

agreement with a man here.” (*God’s Covenants With Man II*, 1985, audiotape #01-4404, side 1)

### **The deification of Satan.**

Satan is deified as the God of this world and is positioned with so much power that he could manage to “turn the light off in God.”

### **Ownership of the earth is Satan’s.**

“God’s on the outside looking in. He doesn’t have any legal entree into the earth. The thing don’t belong to Him. You see how sassy the Devil was in the presence of God in the book of Job? God said, ‘Where have you been?’ Wasn’t any of God’s business. He [Satan] didn’t even have to answer if he didn’t want to ... God didn’t argue with him a bit! You see, this is the position that God’s been in ... Might say, ‘Well, if God’s running things He’s doing a lousy job of it.’ He hadn’t been running ’em, except when He’s just got, you know, a little bit of a chance.” (*Image of God in You III*, 1989, audiotape #01-1403, side 1)

“Here’s where we’re gonna depart from ordinary church: Now, you see, God is injecting His Word into the earth to produce this Jesus—these faith-filled words that framed the image that’s in Him ... He can’t just walk onto the earth and say, ‘Let it be!’ because He doesn’t have the right. He had to sneak it in here around the god of this world that was blockin’ every way that he possibly could.” (*The Image of God in You III*, 1989, audiotape #01-1403, side 2)

“The Bible says that God gave this earth to the sons of men ... and when [Adam] turned and gave that dominion to Satan, look where it left God. It left Him on the outside looking in ... He had no legal right to do anything about it, did He? ... He had injected Himself illegally into the earth—what Satan had intended for Him to do was to fall for it—pull off an illegal act and turn the light off in God, and subordinate God to himself ... He intended to get God into such a trap that He couldn’t get out.” (*What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 1990, audiotape #02-0017)

“Adam committed high treason; and at that point, all the dominion and authority God had given to him was handed over to Satan. Suddenly, God was on the outside looking in ... After Adam’s fall, God found Himself in a peculiar position ... God needed an avenue back into the earth ... God laid out His proposition and Abram accepted it. It gave God access to the earth and gave man access to God ... Technically, if God ever broke the Covenant, He would have to destroy Himself.” (*Our Covenant with God*, 1987, pp. 8-11)

### **Jesus Christ communicates directly with Copeland.**

“Don’t be disturbed when people put you down and speak harshly and roughly of you. 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.” (“Take Time to Pray,” *Believer’s Voice of*, February 1987, p. 9)

“The Spirit of God spoke to me and He said, ‘Son, realize this. Now follow me in this and don’t let your tradition trip you up.’ He said, ‘Think this way—a twice-born man whipped Satan in his own domain.’ And I threw my Bible down ... like that. I said, ‘What?’ He said, ‘A born-again man defeated Satan, the firstborn of many brethren defeated him.’ He said, ‘You are the very image, the very copy of that one.’ I said, ‘Well now you don’t mean, you couldn’t dare mean, that I could have done the same thing?’ He said, ‘Oh yeah, if you’d had the knowledge of the Word of God that He did, you could’ve done the same thing, ‘cause you’re a reborn man too.’” (*Substitution and Identification*, 1989, tape #00-0202, side 2)

### **Atonement Atrocities.**

Copeland says that Jesus became a sign of Satan when He was hanging on the cross: “The righteousness of God was made to be sin. He accepted the sin nature of Satan in His own spirit. And at the moment that He did so, He cried, ‘My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?’ You don’t know what happened at the cross. Why do you think Moses, upon instruction of God, raised the serpent upon that pole instead of a lamb? That used to bug me. I said, ‘Why in the world would you want to put a snake up there—the sign of Satan? Why didn’t you put a lamb on that pole?’ And the Lord said, ‘Because it was a sign of Satan that was hanging on the cross.’ He said, ‘I accepted, in My own spirit, spiritual death; and the light was turned off.’” (*What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 1990, audiotape #02-0017, side 2)

“When Jesus cried, ‘It is finished!’ He was not speaking of the plan of redemption. There were still three days and nights to go through before He went to the throne. ... Jesus’ death on the cross was only the beginning of the complete work of redemption.” (“Jesus—Our Lord of Glory,” *Believer’s Voice of Victory*, April 1982, p. 3)

### **Jesus’ “rebirth” in hell.**

“[I]n hell He [Jesus] suffered for you and for me. The Bible says hell was made for Satan and his angles. It was not made for men. Satan was holding the Son of God there illegally ... The trap was set for Satan and Jesus was the bait.” (*Walking in the Realm of the Miraculous*, 1979, p. 77)

Satan blew it on a technicality, according to Faith theology, because Satan had dragged Jesus into hell illegally. As Copeland puts it, “The Devil forgot to take into consideration that Jesus hadn’t sinned Himself but, rather, had merely become sin as a result of the sin of others.” (*What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 1990, audiotape #02-0017, side 2)

“... [t]hat Word of the living God went down into that pit of destruction and charged the spirit of Jesus with resurrection power! Suddenly His twisted, death-wracked spirit began to fill out and come back to life. He began to look like something the devil had never seen before. He was literally being reborn before the devil’s very eyes. He began to flex His spiritual muscles ... Jesus was born again—the first-born from the dead the Word calls Him—and He whipped the devil in his own backyard. He took everything he had away from him. He took his keys and his authority away from him.” (“The Price of it

All,” *Believer’s Voice of Victory*, September 1991, p. 4)

## **Miscellaneous Quotes**

“Any O.T. prophet could have atoned for our sins if they knew what Jesus knew.”  
(*Substitution and Identification*)

“Jesus is no longer the only begotten Son of God.” (*Now We Are In Christ Jesus*, 1980, p. 24)

“Adam was made in the image of God. He was as much female as he was male. He was exactly like God. Then God separated him and removed the female part. Woman means ‘man with the womb.’ Eve had as much authority as Adam did as long as they stayed together.” (*Sensitivity of Heart*, KCP Publications, 1984, p. 23)

“He [Jesus] is suffering all that there is to suffer. There is no suffering left apart from Him. His emaciated, poured out, little, wormy spirit is down in the bottom of that thing [hell]. And the Devil thinks he’s got Him destroyed.” (*Believer’s Voice of Victory* program [21 April 1991]. This message was originally delivered at the Full Gospel Motorcycle Rally Association, 1990 Rally at Eagle Mountain Lake, Texas.)

“As a believer, you have a right to make commands in the name of Jesus. Each time you stand on the Word, you are commanding God to a certain extent because it is His Word.” (*Our Covenant with God*, KCP Publications, 1987, p. 32)

“God was making promises to Jesus, and Jesus wasn’t even there. But, you see, God deals with things that are not yet as though they already were. That’s the way He gets them to come to pass.” (*What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 1990, audiotape #02-0017)

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***Biblical Discernment Ministries - Revised 8/01***