

From Apostles to Apostasy in 2000 years (give or take 200 years)

A brief history of Christianity from the Day of Pentecost
up through the heresies of the New Apostolic Reformation,
and a number of stops in between.
Plus a supplemental glossary of terms.

TL;DR

Galatians 1:6-9

¶I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—⁷not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. ⁸But even **if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.** ⁹As we have said before, so now I say again: **If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.**

There are a lot of people and groups that claim that they have experienced emotions, received additional information, have miraculous “gifts of the Spirit”, seen signs or experiences that draw them closer to God. This then implies that Christians who do not experience these things do not have enough faith, are not “Spirit filled” or don’t have as close of relationship to God. On the contrary, **if anybody says that they have found/ received/ experienced something new, additional, or outside orthodoxy about God or the Bible, it is heretical, and as the Apostle Paul says, “let them be accursed”.**

In looking for experiences signs and wonders, people overlook the miracle of the Bible and Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

1. Pentecost and the beginning of the Apostolic Age: around 33 A.D.

1. Pentecost

At Pentecost, the disciples witness the birth of the New Testament church in the coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell all believers. Thus the scene of the disciples in a room at Pentecost links the commencement of the Holy Spirit’s work in the church with the conclusion of Christ’s earthly ministry in the upper room before the crucifixion.

Another aspect of the Day of Pentecost is the miraculous speaking in foreign tongues which enabled people from various language groups to understand the message of the apostles. In addition is the bold and incisive preaching of Peter to a Jewish audience. The effect of the sermon was powerful, as listeners were “cut to the heart” (Acts 2:37) and instructed by Peter to “repent, and be baptized” (Acts 2:38).

2. Apostles

While Jesus was here on earth, He personally selected from His many followers twelve men and gave them an apostleship—special responsibility to receive and spread His message after He returned to heaven (John 17:6–20; Matthew 10:1–4; Mark 3:14–15). These chosen and sent ones were His apostles. During the time Jesus was training them, He did not explain the criteria that He used to choose them.

Peter proposed choosing a new apostle and set the qualifications. **Not everyone could be considered for an apostleship.**

1. Candidates needed to have been with Jesus during the whole three years that Jesus was among them. That is, he needed to be an eyewitness of Jesus’ baptism when the Heavenly Father validated Jesus’ person and work.
2. He needed to have heard Jesus’ life-changing teachings and been present to see His healings and other miracles.
3. He needed to have witnessed Jesus sacrifice Himself on the cross and to have seen Jesus walk, talk, and eat among the disciples again after His resurrection.

These were the pivotal facts of Jesus’ life, the heart of the message they were to teach, and personal witnesses were required to verify the truth of the good news.

In two of his Epistles, Paul identifies the office of apostle as the first that Jesus appointed to serve His churches (1 Corinthians 12:27–30; Ephesians 4:11). Clearly, the work of apostleship was to lay the foundation of the Church in a sense secondary only to that of Christ Himself (Ephesians 2:19–20), thus requiring eyewitness authority behind their preaching. After the apostles laid the foundation, the Church could be built.

No biblical evidence exists to indicate that these thirteen apostles were replaced when they died. See Acts 12:1–2, for example. Jesus appointed the apostles to do the founding work of the Church, and foundations only need to be laid once. After the apostles’ deaths, other offices besides apostleship, not requiring an eyewitness relationship with Jesus, would carry on the work.
<https://www.gotquestions.org/apostleship.html>

2. Bible Closed: 95 A.D.

Last book written: Book of Revelation

<https://www.gty.org/library/questions/QA176/when-were-the-bible-books-written>

3. End of Apostolic Age: around 100 A.D.

Cessationism is the view that the “miracle gifts” of tongues and healing have ceased—that the end of the apostolic age brought about a cessation of the miracles associated with that age. Most cessationists believe that, **while God can and still does perform miracles today, the Holy Spirit no longer uses individuals to perform miraculous signs.**

The Apostle Paul predicted that the gift of tongues would cease (1 Corinthians 13:8). Here are six proofs that it has already ceased:

1. The apostles, through whom tongues came, were unique in the history of the church. Once their ministry was accomplished, the need for authenticating signs ceased to exist.
2. The miracle (or sign) gifts are only mentioned in the earliest epistles
3. The gift of tongues was a sign to unbelieving Israel that God’s salvation was now available to other nations. See 1 Corinthians 14:21-22 and Isaiah 28:11-12.
4. Tongues was an inferior gift to prophecy (preaching). Preaching the Word of God edifies believers, whereas tongues does not. Believers are told to seek prophesying over speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:1-3).
5. History indicates that tongues did cease. Tongues are not mentioned at all by the Post-Apostolic Fathers. Other writers such as Justin Martyr, Origen, Chrysostom, and Augustine considered tongues something that happened only in the earliest days of the Church.
6. we see that as the era of the apostles drew to a close, healing, like tongues, became less frequent. The Apostle Paul, who raised Eutychus from the dead (Acts 20:9-12), did not heal Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25-27), Trophimus (2 Timothy 4:20), Timothy (1 Timothy 5:23), or even himself (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).

<https://www.gotquestions.org/cessationism.html>

4. Canon Closed: 150-240 A.D.

See Supplemental Material for definition of "Canon"

Why Did It Take So Long?

1. The originals were scattered across the whole empire.
2. No scroll could easily contain more than one or two books.
3. The first-century Christians expected the immediate return of Christ. Because of this, they didn’t plan for the long-term future of the Church.
4. No one church or leader bossed all the others. There were strong and respected leaders among the churches, but Christianity had no supreme bishop who dictated to all the others which books belonged to the canon and which did not.
5. The early leaders assumed the authority of the Gospels and the apostles. It was considered sufficient to quote the Gospels and apostles, since their authority was self-evident. They did not need a list—inconvenient for us, but not significant for them.
6. Only when the heretics attacked the truth was the importance of a canon appreciated. It was not until the mid-second century that the Gnostics and others began writing their own pseudepigrapha (false writing); this prompted orthodox leaders to become alert to the need for stating which books had been recognized across the churches.

In the light of all this, the marvel is not how long it took before the majority of the churches acknowledged a completed canon of the New Testament, but how soon after their writing each book was accepted as authoritative.

Our final appeal is not to man, not even to the early church leaders, but to God, who by His Holy Spirit has put His seal upon the New Testament. By their spiritual content and by the claim of their human writers, the 27 books of our New Testament form part of the “God breathed” Scripture. It is perfectly correct to allow this divine intervention to guard the process by which eventually all the canonical books—and no others—were accepted. The idea of the final canon being an accident, and that any number of books could have ended up in the Bible, ignores the evident unity and provable accuracy of the whole collection of 27 books.

<https://answersingenesis.org/the-word-of-god/why-66-books/>

A closed canon implies that other religious books that devotees purport to be inspired by God should be rejected as spurious. The Book of Mormon, the Quran, the Vedas, The Great Controversy, and Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures—all of these are works of men and women and not the product of God's Holy Spirit.

A closed canon also implies that there are no apostles or prophets today who are receiving new messages from God. The church is gifted with teachers and preachers of the Word today, but **anyone who claims a new revelation from God, proffers his or her message as divinely inspired, or assumes authority on par with the Bible is leading people astray.** Sadly, many in the church give heed to dreams and visions shared from the pulpit and to those who falsely claim that "God spoke to me."

Jude, one of the last books to be included in the canon before it was closed, indicates that the Scriptures have been delivered in their entirety, once for all time: "Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people" (Jude 1:3).

An open canon would allow books or passages of Scripture to be added to the Bible through continued or ongoing revelation. By adding books to the canon, we would essentially be saying that the current Bible is incomplete, or lacking in some way.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/closed-canon.html>

5. Reformation 1517 A.D.

1. The Protestant Reformation was a widespread theological revolt in Europe against the abuses and totalitarian control of the Roman Catholic Church. Reformers such as Martin Luther in Germany, Ulrich Zwingli in Switzerland, and John Calvin in France protested various unbiblical practices of the Catholic Church and promoted a return to sound biblical doctrine. The precipitating event of the Protestant Reformation is generally considered to be Luther's posting of his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the Wittenberg Church on October 31, 1517.

At the heart of the Protestant Reformation lay four basic questions: How is a person saved? Where does religious authority lie? What is the church? What is the essence of Christian living? In answering these questions, Protestant Reformers developed what would be known as the "Five Solas" (sola being the Latin word for "alone")

1. Sola Scriptura, "Scripture Alone."
2. Sola Gratia, "Salvation by Grace Alone."
3. Sola Fide, "Salvation by Faith Alone."
4. Solus Christus, "In Christ Alone."
5. Soli Deo Gloria, "For the Glory of God Alone."

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Protestant-Reformation.html>

For centuries the Roman Catholic Church had made its traditions superior in authority to the Bible. Some examples are prayer to saints and/or Mary, the immaculate conception, transubstantiation, infant baptism, indulgences, and papal authority. *The Roman Catholic papacy developed into an abusive, corrupt, autocratic, totalitarian system by claiming apostolic authority through a supposed line of succession back to Peter (Strange Fire, Ch. 5)*

2. Sola scriptura means that Scripture alone is authoritative for the faith and practice of the Christian. The Bible is complete, authoritative, and true. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

The Word of God is the only authority for the Christian faith. Traditions are valid only when they are based on Scripture and are in full agreement with Scripture. Traditions that contradict the Bible are not of God and are not a valid aspect of the Christian faith. **Sola scriptura is the only way to avoid subjectivity and keep personal opinion from taking priority over the teachings of the Bible.**

Sola scriptura does not nullify the concept of church traditions. Rather, sola scriptura gives us a solid foundation on which to base church traditions. There are many practices, in both Catholic and Protestant churches, that are the result of traditions, not the explicit teaching of Scripture. It is good, and even necessary, for the church to have traditions. Traditions play an important role in clarifying and organizing Christian practice. At the same time, in order for these traditions to be valid, they must not be in disagreement with God's Word. They must be based on the solid foundation of the teaching of Scripture. The problem with the Roman Catholic Church, and many other churches, is that they base traditions on

traditions which are based on traditions which are based on traditions, often with the initial tradition not being in full harmony with the Scriptures. That is why Christians must always go back to sola scriptura, the authoritative Word of God, as the only solid basis for faith and practice.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/sola-scriptura.html>

6. Holiness Movement: 1840

The Holiness movement is related to Pentecostalism in that it says that God helps the believer by giving him the “second blessing” of His Spirit. **The “second blessing,” according to Holiness teaching, seals the believer in a sinless state.** Unfortunately, a “sinless state” is not supported by either the Bible or human experience. While an emotional experience can make one feel that holiness is possible and that we never want to sin again, we still live in the flesh, and the flesh is still beset with weakness (Romans 7:14–19). Even the apostle Paul was unable to be completely sinless, and he admitted as much, saying that the old law of sin was still alive in his body, even though he served God in his mind and spirit (Romans 7:21–23).

Christians do sin ([1 John 1:5–10](#)), but, hopefully, less and less as we mature in Christ ([Philippians 3:12](#)). **The Holiness movement is wrong in its assumption that a believer can keep enough rules to attain sinless perfection in this world.**

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Holiness-movement.html>

7. Apostolic Faith Movement: 1901

First recorded group attempting to recreate Day of Pentecost speaking in tongues (which was speaking unknown foreign languages intelligibly). **They claimed they were speaking actual languages, but it was determined to be both spoken and written gibberish.** (Strange Fire, Ch. 2)

Much of this fervor was driven by the revival meetings held by those in the Holiness movement, and there were occasional reports of people speaking in tongues. The first widespread use of tongues was at a revival in Topeka, Kansas, in January 1900, led by Charles Parham. Agnes Ozman, a Methodist, began to speak in tongues, and others in the meeting eventually followed suit.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Pentecostals.html>

8. Pentecostalism: 1906

is a movement within Christianity that can be traced back to the Holiness movement in the Methodist Church. A major focus of Pentecostal churches is Holy Spirit baptism as evidenced by speaking in tongues

In 1906, a series of revival meetings on Azusa Street in Los Angeles led to a widespread experience of tongues-speaking, which spread to many parts of the country. The meetings were led by William Seymour, one of Charles Parham's students. Parham and Seymour eventually parted ways, because **Parham believed many of the manifestations of Azusa Street were of the flesh, or perhaps even demonic.**

These earnest believers wanted to run their race faithfully and were seeking God's help to do so. As that earnestness gave way to emotional religious fervor, doctrines were developed to explain and support the emotions and experiences.. Some of the questionable foundations laid by John Wesley (e.g., a second blessing of perfection) paved the way for later Pentecostal doctrines of new works of the Spirit. Some Pentecostals allow experie **For many today, the emphasis is on the excitement, the experience, or the new word of prophecy** nce to trump scriptural teaching and attempt to conform Scripture to what they “know by experience.” But fervent experience, even when it involves miracles, is not the test of true faith (see Matthew 7:22–23).

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Pentecostals.html>

9. Word of Faith movement: 1930s

The Word of Faith movement grew out of the Pentecostal movement in the late 20th century. Its founder was E. W. Kenyon, who studied the metaphysical New Thought teachings of Phineas Quimby. Mind science (where “**name it and claim it**” originated) was combined with Pentecostalism, resulting in a peculiar mix of orthodox Christianity and mysticism.

At the heart of the Word of Faith movement is the belief in the “force of faith.” It is believed words can be used to manipulate the faith-force, and thus actually create what they believe Scripture promises (health and wealth). Laws supposedly governing the faith-force are said to operate independently of God's sovereign will and that God Himself is subject to these laws. This is nothing short of idolatry, turning our faith—and by extension ourselves—into god.

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to replicate the Incarnation in believers so they could become little gods as God had originally intended.

Following the natural progression of these teachings, as little gods we again have the ability to manipulate the faith-force and become prosperous in all areas of life. **Illness, sin, and failure are the result of a lack of faith.**

Word of Faith teaching is decidedly unbiblical. It is not a denomination and does not have a formal organization or hierarchy. Instead, it is a movement that is heavily influenced by a number of high-profile pastors and teachers such as Kenneth Hagin, Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, Paul and Jan Crouch, and Fred Price.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Word-Faith.html>

10. Latter Rain Movement: 1948

They were convinced that they were on the verge of a new era, one in which the Holy Spirit would demonstrate His power in a greater way than the world had ever seen. Not even the age of the apostles, they said, had witnessed such a movement of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible is interpreted in a symbolic, extremely stylized manner. An emphasis is placed on extra-biblical revelation, such as personal prophecies, experiences, and directives straight from God. Latter Rain doctrine includes the following beliefs:

the gifts of the Spirit, including tongues, are received through the laying on of hands

Christians can be demonized and require deliverance

God has restored all the offices of ministry to the Church, including apostle and prophet

divine healing can be administered through the laying on of hands

praise and worship will usher God into our presence

women have a full and equal ministry role in the Church

denominational lines will be destroyed, and the Church will unify in the last days

the “latter rain” will bring God’s work to completion; the Church will be victorious over the world and usher in Christ’s kingdom

Many “apostles” in the Latter Rain Movement also teach the doctrine of “the manifest sons of God.” **This is a heretical doctrine which says that the Church will give rise to a special group of “overcomers” who will receive spiritual bodies, becoming immortal.**

Today, the term “latter rain” is rarely used, but the theology of Latter Rain continues to exert an influence. Most branches of the Charismatic Movement adhere to Latter Rain teaching.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/latter-rain-movement.html>

11. Faith Healers: 1950s

There is no doubt that God has the power to heal anyone at any time. The question is whether He chooses to do so through those who are called “faith healers.” These individuals typically convince their audiences that God wants them to be well and that through their faith—and usually a financial offering—God will reward their faith by healing them through the power of Jesus.

By comparing the healing ministry of the Lord Jesus to that of the modern faith healers, we can determine whether their claims have any basis in Scripture. If, as they say, they heal through the same power and in the same way that Jesus healed, we should be able to see marked similarities between them. However, just the opposite is true.

Jesus healed actual organic diseases, not symptoms as the faith healers do. Jesus never healed anyone of a headache or back pain. He healed leprosy, blindness, and paralysis, miracles that were truly verifiable. Finally, Jesus healed the ultimate disease—death. He brought forth Lazarus after four days in the grave. No faith healer can duplicate that. In addition, **His healings did not require faith as a precondition. In fact, most of those He healed were unbelievers.**

Why, if faith healers have the power to heal, do they not walk the halls of the hospitals healing everyone and releasing them all? Why do they not go to clinics and cure all the AIDS patients? **They do not because they cannot. They do not have the power of healing that Jesus possessed.**

<https://www.gotquestions.org/faith-healers.html>

Promoters of the false “prosperity gospel” and Word of Faith movement often like to talk about “seeding,” “seed faith offerings,” and “hundred-fold returns.” **A seed faith offering is money given in faith that God will multiply it and return it to the giver. The more money you give—and the more faith you have—the more money (or healing) you get in return.**

God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7), but we must not assume that His favor will be shown in financial returns. Nor should we appropriate promises given to Old Testament Israel for ourselves. Our motive for giving should not be to get money in return.

The seed faith teaching amounts to little more than a get-rich-quick scheme that preys upon the desperate and hurting among God’s people.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/seed-faith.html>

12. Charismatic Movement: 1960

The Charismatic movement is most known for its acceptance of speaking in tongues (also known as glossolalia), divine healing, and prophecies as evidence of the Holy Spirit. Most meetings are for praying and spirited singing, dancing, shouting “in the spirit,” and raising hands and arms in prayer. Also, anointing the sick with oil is often part of the worship service. These are the primary reasons for the movement’s growth and popularity. While growth and popularity are certainly desirable, they cannot be used as a test for truth.

Today, we are witnessing a growing menace of demonic activity in the realm of the miraculous. Where Satan does not succeed in taking the Bible from us, he works hard at taking us from the Bible. He does this simply by getting Christians to focus their attention on the claims of men and women to some supernatural experience. As a result, those who seek after the experiences of others have neither time nor interest in searching the Scriptures for God’s truth.

There is no denying that God performs miracles. Some of what occurs in the Charismatic movement very well may be a true work of the Holy Spirit. However, the core truth is this: the Body of Christ does not need new apostles, nor new faith healers, nor self-styled miracle workers. What the Church needs is to return to the Word of God and proclaim the whole counsel of God in the power and love of the Holy Spirit.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Charismatic-movement.html>

13. Dominion theology: 1970s

started in the early 1970s with a goal of “taking dominion” of the earth, twisting Genesis 1:28 to include a mandate for Christians to control civil affairs and all other aspects of society.

This verse is taken by Christian Dominionists as a divine mandate to claim dominion over the earth, physically, spiritually and politically. However, this is taking a large step away from the text, which only says to have dominion over the creatures of earth, and to “subdue” the earth. It is likely that this verse simply means for humanity to a) multiply and expand over the face of the earth instead of staying in one place and b) keep and take care of all other living things. There were no political entities in Genesis 1.

However, dominion theology goes even further with this verse, leading to two other philosophies: Christian Reconstructionism and Kingdom Now theology. Christian Reconstructionism is an intellectually high-minded worldview, most popular among the more conservative branches of Christian faith. Reconstructionism says that dominion will be achieved by each Christian excelling in his or her individual field (Christian artists taking dominion of the art world, Christian musicians taking dominion of the music world, Christian businessmen taking dominion of the business world, etc., until all systems and fields are “subdued”).

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-dominionism.html>

14. Kingdom Now theology: 1980s

most popular among Charismatic and Pentecostal groups, focuses on taking dominion of the earth by way of spiritual battle. Kingdom Now adherents believe that long ago Satan stole the “keys of spiritual dominion” when he deceived Adam and Eve. Then, when Christ gave the “keys of the kingdom” to Peter in [Matthew 16:19](#), it was a sign that dominion had been returned to man. Now it is our job to “take back” what is rightfully ours – that is, to claim dominion over the earth and spiritually subdue it for Christ. Proponents of Kingdom Now theology believe that the capturing of this dominion includes having Christians in political office, plus a return of spiritual power, manifested by signs, miracles and healing. Kingdom Now theology is taught in the book *When Heaven Invades Earth* by **Bill Johnson of Bethel Church**.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-dominionism.html>

Kingdom Now theology is a theological belief within the Charismatic movement of Protestant Christianity, mainly in the United States. **Kingdom Now proponents believe that God lost control over the world to Satan when Adam and Eve sinned.** Since then, the theology goes, God has been trying to reestablish control over the world by seeking a special group of believers—known variously as "covenant people," "overcomers," or "Joel's army"

Proponents of Kingdom Now teaching also don't believe in the rapture, which is explained away as a feeling of rapture or excitement when the Lord returns to receive the kingdom from our hands.

Kingdom Now theology sees the second coming of Jesus in two stages: first through the flesh of the believers (and in particular the flesh of today's apostles and prophets), and then in person to take over the kingdom handed to Him by those who have been victorious (the "overcomers"). Prior to the second coming, overcomers must purge the earth of all evil influences. **Kingdom Now claims that Jesus cannot return until all His enemies have been put under the feet of the church** (including death, presumably).

The idea that God has "lost control" of anything is ludicrous, especially coupled with the idea that He needs human beings to help Him regain that control. He is the sovereign Lord of the universe, complete and holy, perfect in all His attributes. He has complete control over all things—past, present and future—and nothing happens outside His command.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/kingdom-now.html>

15. Third Wave Movement: 1980s

It is sometimes called the "Third Wave of the Holy Spirit" or the "Signs and Wonders Movement." The first wave was the original Pentecostal Movement that began in the early 1900s with the teachings of Charles Parham followed by the Azusa Street Revival. The second wave then came in the 1960s with the Charismatic movement.

In addition to highlighting some of the melodramatic practices of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, the Third Wave goes even further with its emphasis on the sensational, including claims of signs and wonders performed by "modern-day apostles and prophets."

Key teachings of the Third Wave Movement include what is known as "power evangelism." The basic premise of power evangelism is that the preaching of the gospel must be accompanied with signs and wonders in order for people to respond in faith. Proponents of this view have an unbalanced focus on miracles, speaking in tongues, healing, and prophecy. They miss the fact that it is the gospel message itself that is the power of God to salvation (Romans 1). **Third Wave proponents essentially deny the sufficiency of Scripture and believe that God is communicating directly through modern-day prophets and apostles.** Therefore, they believe that God is giving new revelation today that undermines the sufficiency and authority of Scripture. **The words of these "new apostles and prophets" become more important than the clear teaching of Scripture. As with all Pentecostal/Charismatic movements, personal experience plays a greater role for determining "truth" than does sound doctrine.**

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Third-Wave-movement.html>

16. Emergent Church: 1990s

The emerging / emergent church movement falls into line with basic post-modernist thinking—**it is about experience over reason, subjectivity over objectivity, spirituality over religion, images over words, outward over inward, feelings over truth.** These are reactions to modernism and are thought to be necessary in order to actively engage contemporary culture.

For example, because experience is valued more highly than reason, truth becomes relative. Relativism opens up all kinds of problems, as it destroys the standard that the Bible contains absolute truth, negating the belief that biblical truth can be absolute. If the Bible is not our source for absolute truth, and personal experience is allowed to define and interpret what truth actually is, a saving faith in Jesus Christ is rendered meaningless.

Another area where the emerging / emergent church movement has become anti-biblical is its focus on ecumenism. Unity among people coming from different religious backgrounds and diversity in the expression of corporate worship are strong focuses of the emergent church movement. **Being ecumenical means that compromise is taking place, and this results in a watering down of Scripture in favor of not offending an apostate.** This is in direct opposition to passages such as Revelation 2:14-17, Jesus' letter to the church of Pergamum, in which the Church is warned against tolerating those who teach false doctrine.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/emerging-church-emergent.html>

17. New Apostolic Reformation: 2001

The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is a movement pioneered by C. Peter Wagner. This is what charismatic and continuationist doctrine looks like when taken to its logical conclusion. **The NAR claims that not only the gifts, but also the office of apostleship still continues today. And as apostles, they pretend to speak for God and wield His divine authority—but it is all merely a pretense.**

According to the New Testament, an apostle had to be:

1. A physical eyewitness of the resurrected Christ (Acts 1:22; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:7–8).
2. Appointed by the Lord (Mark 3:14; Luke 6:13; Acts 1:2; 10:41; Galatians 1:1).
3. Able to authenticate his apostleship with miraculous signs (Matthew 10:1; Acts 2:43; 5:12; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3–4).

Wagner even goes so far as to describe this era as “The Second Apostolic Age.” His “studies indicate that it began around the year 2001,” although he doesn’t bother to explain or define what those studies were.

<https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B131118/the-apostles-who-dont-do-anything>

Supernatural Signs & Wonders; Dominionism; The Latter Rain Movement; Joel's Army; The 7 Mountain Mandate; Third Wave Revivalism; IHOP; **Bill Johnson's Bethel Church, The Hillsong Media Empire**, these are all a part of this shape-shifting movement in one way or another. It is gobbling up churches and deceiving millions who don't even know they've become a part of an apostate, end-times falling away.

Here are those traits, beliefs, and some of the common lingo used by adherents:

“APOSTLES” We’re in a “Second Apostolic Age.” There are new Apostles on the earth today, anointed by the laying of hands to represent and speak for God here on Earth. These “Super Apostles” are equal to the original Apostles – the ones who witnessed Jesus’ life, death and resurrection and were appointed by Christ Himself to the office. Since these new apostles are commissioned by God, their authority may not be questioned.

“KINGDOM” Rather than preach the Gospel of the cross, Apostolic leaders are working to bring the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven to Earth.

“DESTINY” “PRESENCE” “GLORY” Though members are not always charismatic, they frequently emphasize a manifestation of “Glory” and “God’s presence,” and often have a special anointing to receive direct revelation from God, perform healings and other signs and wonders. They teach that our purpose is to achieve our dream destiny so that we can change the world.

“REVIVAL” Revival on a massive scale is key in this movement. There is a strong emphasis on an “end times harvest” through a great awakening that we can usher in. Often these revivals are held in stadiums and reach millions around the world via live stream technology; they are marketed and produced like rock concerts. All scripture verses about an end times falling away are ignored, and get replaced with hyped-up claims about the Next Big Thing that’s always just around the corner.

“UNITY” Unity (at the expense of biblical doctrine) is almost always used as both the how and the why in this movement. Unity for the sake of bringing Heaven to Earth is leading to the blurring of doctrinal and denominational lines, often bringing together well-known leaders of charismatic, reformed, Word of Faith, seeker-emergent, progressive and Roman Catholics churches, all under one umbrella.

NAR DENIES THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE. NAR adherents may believe in the inerrancy and authority of the Bible, but **God’s breathed-out Word is just not enough for them. Jesus’ sacrificial death for our sins is not good enough**; the promise of eternal life in Heaven is not good enough.

<http://www.piratechristian.com/berean-examiner/the-six-hallmarks-of-a-nar-church>

NAR is a dominionist movement which asserts that God is restoring the lost offices of church governance, namely the offices of Prophet and Apostle.

Claim direct revelation from God and many allege that Jesus and angels visit them in person. Some of them declare that they have visited heaven many times and had conversations with Jesus as well as the Prophets and Apostles.

Denigration of the Bible and Sola Scriptura.

Experience oriented theology and based in emotionalism.

Steeped in mysticism.

<https://bereanresearch.org/dominionism-nar/>

It is not new, it is not a reformation, and it is certainly not apostolic. This is not the first time in church history that power-hungry false teachers have nominated themselves as apostles to gain greater spiritual influence over others. It is equally misleading to refer to it as a “reformation”. In fact, **the Reformation was primarily a reaction against the self-proclaimed apostolic authority of the pope.** (Strange Fire, Ch. 5)

18. Passion Translation: 2017

The Passion Translation is a re-worded and re-written Bible, apparently intended to support a particular strain of theology.

any translation completed by a single person raises questions of accountability. Such efforts are far more prone to personal preferences. As it turns out, The Passion Translation of the Bible not only reflects Simmons’ [New Apostolic Reformation \(NAR\)](#) theology, but it appears to be deliberately written in order to promote it.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Passion-Translation.html>

TPT is not a Bible, and any church that treats it as such and receives it as canon will, by that very action, turn itself into an unorthodox sect. If the translation had been packaged as a commentary on Scripture I would not have needed to write this review; but **to package it as Scripture is an offence against God. Every believer who is taught to treat it as the enscripturated words of God is in spiritual danger**, not least because of the sentimentalised portrait of God that TPT Psalms sets out to paint. **Simmons’s caricature of God ... eliminates all but one facet of God’s feelings about us, and then gets that one wrong.** (5.3)

Like Joseph Smith and The Book of Mormon, Brian Simmons has created a new scripture with the potential to rule as canon over a new sect. (5.3)

So frequently does TPT misrepresent or ignore the original text that one is forced to conclude that its author had little interest in representing the meaning of the original as preserved in the manuscript tradition. **Instead he abuses ancient witnesses, pressing them into the service of his own novel ideas about what the text ought to say.** In Nida’s words, this is not a linguistic translation; it is a cultural translation, and hence **it is not a legitimate Bible.** (5.2)

It evidently does not trust in the power of Scripture to move the hearts of its readers without a good deal of outside assistance. After all, if Scripture were sufficient for the task, TPT would not have dialled the emotional volume up to eleven. (5.1.2)

Simmons makes a false claim when he states that TPT will ‘re-introduce the passion and fire of the Bible to the English reader.’ It’s the other way round – **Simmons is trying to introduce the ‘passion and fire’ beloved of his own culture into the Bible.** He is trying to make the Bible value something that we value – the feeling of being overwhelmed by a strong emotion – **in spite of the strong stance the Bible consistently takes against this exact thing.** (5.1.2)

To call a Bible a ‘Passion Translation’ would have been unthinkable until recent times. It would be like having a ‘Greed Translation,’ or a ‘Lust Translation’. (5.1.2)

Fatally for Simmons’s ‘passion’ programme, the emotions TPT seeks to evoke do not arise naturally from the word of God, but are artificially introduced. (5.1.2)

The Bible is both deeply affirming of human emotions, and **acutely aware of the danger of being controlled by them.** (5.1.1)

Simmons seems as uninterested in linguistic accuracy as he is in textual accuracy. He searches the dictionary, and sometimes apparently his imagination, for ways to **insert new ideas that happen to align with his goals, regardless of their truthfulness.** (2.2)

Brian Simmons has made a new translation of the Psalms (and now the whole New Testament) which aims to ‘re-introduce the passion and fire of the Bible to the English reader.’ He achieves this by **abandoning all interest in textual accuracy, playing fast and loose with the original languages, and inserting so much new material into the text that it is at least 50% longer than the original.** The result is a strongly

sectarian translation that no longer counts as Scripture; **by masquerading as a Bible it threatens to bind entire churches in thrall to a false god.** (Abstract)
<http://themelios.thegospelcoalition.org/article/burning-scripture-with-passion-a-review-of-the-psalms-passion-translation>

Supplemental Materials

1. Apostasy

from the Greek word *apostasia*, means “a defiance of an established system or authority; a rebellion; an abandonment or breach of faith.”

As to the forms of apostasy, there are two main types: (1) a falling away from key and true doctrines of the Bible into **heretical teachings that proclaim to be “the real” Christian doctrine**, and (2) a complete renunciation of the Christian faith, which results in a full abandonment of Christ.

The dangers of apostasy were warned about in the book of Jude, which serves as a handbook for understanding the characteristics of apostates. Jude was the half-brother of Jesus and a leader in the early church. In his New Testament letter, he outlines how to recognize apostasy and strongly urges those in the body of Christ to contend earnestly for the faith (vs. 3). Jude is telling us that there will be a constant fight against false teaching and that Christians should take it so seriously that we “agonize” over the fight in which we are engaged. Moreover, Jude makes it clear that **every Christian is called to this fight, not just church leaders, so it is critical that all believers sharpen their discernment skills so that they can recognize and prevent apostasy in their midst.**

<https://www.gotquestions.org/apostasy.html>

2. Orthodoxy

orthodoxy, which is “correct teaching” or “correct doctrine.” If someone is orthodox, it means that he believes correctly.

According to the Bible, correct doctrine will lead to correct behavior, but the doctrine comes first. In Romans, Paul spends the first eleven chapters explaining correct doctrine. In Romans 12:1 he transitions to correct practice: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.” The word therefore means that the instructions that follow are based upon the doctrine that has just been explained.

In Titus 3:8 Paul pulls orthodoxy and orthopraxy together in one verse: “I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God [orthodoxy] may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good [orthopraxy].”

<https://www.gotquestions.org/orthopraxy-orthopraxis.html>

3. Canon

The term “canon” is used to describe the books that are divinely inspired and therefore belong in the Bible. The difficulty in determining the biblical canon is that the Bible does not give us a list of the books that belong in the Bible. Determining the canon was a process conducted first by Jewish rabbis and scholars and later by early Christians. Ultimately, it was God who decided what books belonged in the biblical canon. A book of Scripture belonged in the canon from the moment God inspired its writing. It was simply a matter of God’s convincing His human followers which books should be included in the Bible.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/canon-Bible.html>

This collection of 66 books is known as the “canon” of Scripture. That word comes from the Hebrew *kanah* (a rod), and the Greek *kanon* (a reed). Among other things, the words referred equally to the measuring rod of the carpenter and the ruler of the scribe. It became a common word for anything that was the measure by which others were to be judged (see *Galatians 6:16*, for example). After the apostles, church leaders used it to refer to the body of Christian doctrine accepted by the churches. Clement and Origen of Alexandria, in the third century, were possibly the first to employ the word to refer to the Scriptures (the Old Testament).² From then on, it became more common in Christian use with reference to a collection of books that are fixed in their number, divine in their origin, and universal in their authority.

<https://answersingenesis.org/the-word-of-god/why-66-books/>

4. How should a Christian respond to people who claim, “I saw Jesus”?

Jesus informed His disciples that He would no longer be in the world after His death and resurrection. In His High Priestly Prayer recorded in John 17, Jesus prays for protection for His disciples because He would “remain in the world no longer” (John 17:11). He knew that His time on earth was coming to an end and that He would no longer be physically present with His followers. Instead, He would send the Spirit to indwell them (John 14:17; 15:26) while He Himself would be seated in heaven with the Father.

If someone today were to actually see Jesus, it would require a divine vision or a heavenly revelation of some kind. **The Bible gives no indication that such extra-biblical revelation is to be expected today, now that the apostolic age has ended.** The canon of Scripture is complete (see Revelation 22:18). **For this reason alone, when someone claims, “I saw Jesus,” a Christian should be skeptical. If a person truly did see Jesus today, nothing in his vision of Jesus would contradict the truth of the Bible, nor would it add anything to the revelation God has already given us in His Word.**

Some who have claimed, “I saw Jesus,” have proceeded to lead many people astray. For example, in 1820 Joseph Smith claimed to have seen Jesus, and the result was Mormonism. In 1844 Ellen G. White claimed to have seen Jesus, and the result was Seventh-Day Adventism. Obviously, not everyone who says they have seen Jesus is on the side of truth.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/I-saw-Jesus.html>

5. speaking in tongues (xenoglossia)

The first occurrence of speaking in tongues occurred on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4. The apostles went out and shared the gospel with the crowds, speaking to them in their own languages: “We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” (Acts 2:11). The Greek word translated tongues literally means “languages.” Therefore, the gift of tongues is speaking in a language a person does not know in order to minister to someone who does speak that language.

If the gift of speaking in tongues were active in the church today, it would be performed in agreement with Scripture. It would be a real and intelligible language (1 Corinthians 14:10). It would be for the purpose of communicating God's Word with a person of another language (Acts 2:6-12). It would be in agreement with the command God gave through the apostle Paul, “If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God” (1 Corinthians 14:27-28). It would also be in accordance with 1 Corinthians 14:33, “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”

God most definitely can give a person the gift of speaking in tongues to enable him or her to communicate with a person who speaks another language. The Holy Spirit is sovereign in the dispersion of the spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11). However, God does not seem to be doing this. Tongues does not seem to occur today in the manner it did in the New Testament, despite the fact that it would be immensely useful. **The vast majority of believers who claim to practice the gift of speaking in tongues do not do so in agreement with the Scriptures mentioned above. These facts lead to the conclusion that the gift of tongues has ceased or is at least a rarity in God's plan for the church today.**

<https://www.gotquestions.org/gift-of-tongues.html>

6. glossolalia

a phenomenon sometimes referred to as “ecstatic utterances,” **is the uttering of unintelligible, language-like sounds while in a state of ecstasy.** Glossolalia is sometimes confused with xenoglossia, which is the biblical “gift of tongues.” However, whereas glossolalia is babbling in a nonexistent language, xenoglossia is the ability to speak fluently a language the speaker has never learned.

In just about every part of the world, glossolalia can be observed. **Pagan religions all over the world are obsessed with tongues.** These include the Shamans in the Sudan, the Shango cult of the West Coast of Africa, the Zor cult of Ethiopia, the Voodoo cult in Haiti, and the Aborigines of South America and Australia. Murmuring or speaking gibberish that is construed to be deep mystical insight by holy men is an ancient practice.

Simply put, the practice of glossolalia is not the biblical gift of tongues. Paul made it clear that the chief purpose of the gift of speaking in tongues was to be a sign for those who did not believe and to spread the good news, the gospel of Christ (1 Corinthians 14:19, 22).

<https://www.gotquestions.org/glossolalia.html>

7. Praying in Tongues

First Corinthians 14:13-17 indicates that praying in tongues is also to be interpreted. As a result, it seems that praying in tongues was offering a prayer to God. This prayer would minister to someone who spoke that language, but would also need to be interpreted so that the entire body could be edified.

What do we say, then, about the many Christians who have experienced praying in tongues and find it to be very personally edifying? First, we must base our faith and practice on Scripture, not experience. We must view our experiences in light of Scripture, not interpret Scripture in light of our experiences. Second, many of the cults and world religions also report occurrences of speaking in tongues/praying in tongues. Obviously the Holy Spirit is not gifting these unbelieving individuals. So, it seems that the demons are able to counterfeit the gift of speaking in tongues. This should cause us to compare even more carefully our experiences with Scripture. Third, studies have shown how speaking/praying in tongues can be a learned behavior. Through hearing and observing others speak in tongues, a person can learn the procedure, even subconsciously. This is the most likely explanation for the vast majority of instances of speaking/praying in tongues among Christians. Fourth, the feeling of “self-edification” is natural. The human body produces adrenaline and endorphins when it experiences something new, exciting, emotional, and/or disconnected from rational thought.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/praying-in-tongues.html>

8. Contemplative Prayer / Lectio Divina

Contemplative prayer has slowly increased in practice and popularity along with the rise of the emerging church movement—a movement which embraces many unscriptural ideas and practices. Contemplative prayer is one such practice.

Contemplative prayer begins with “[centering prayer](#),” a meditative practice where the practitioner focuses on a word and repeats that word over and over for the duration of the exercise. The purpose is to clear one’s mind of outside concerns so that God’s voice may be more easily heard. After the centering prayer, the practitioner is to sit still, listen for direct guidance from God, and feel His presence.

Although this might sound like an innocent exercise, this type of prayer has no scriptural support whatsoever. In fact, it is just the opposite of how prayer is defined in the Bible. “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” (Philippians 4:6). “In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete” (John 16:23-24). These verses and others clearly portray prayer as being comprehensible communication with God, not an esoteric, mystical meditation.

Contemplative prayer is no different than the meditative exercises used in Eastern religions and New Age cults. Contemplative prayer, as practiced in the modern prayer movement, is in opposition to biblical Christianity and should definitely be avoided.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/contemplative-prayer.html>

Those who take a supernatural approach to the text tend to disconnect it from its context and natural meaning and use it in a subjective, individualistic, experiential way for which it was never intended.

Further, the dangers inherent in opening our minds and listening for voices should be obvious. The contemplative pray-ers are so eager to hear something—anything—that they can lose the objectivity needed to discern between God’s voice, their own thoughts, and the infiltration of demons into their minds. Satan and his minions are always eager for inroads into the minds of the unsuspecting, and to open our minds in such ways is to invite disaster.

Finally, the attack on the sufficiency of Scripture is a clear distinctive of lectio divina. Where the Bible claims to be all we need to live the Christian life (2 Timothy 3:16), lectio’s adherents deny that.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/lectio-divina.html>

9. Slain in the Spirit

Most commonly, being “slain in the Spirit” happens when a minister lays hands on someone, and that person collapses to the floor, supposedly overcome by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Many people claim to experience an energy or a force that causes them to fall back. However, we find no biblical basis for this concept. Yes, there may be some energy or force involved, but if so, it is very likely not of God and not the result of the working of the Holy Spirit.

It is unfortunate that people look to such bizarre counterfeits that produce no spiritual fruit, rather than pursuing the practical fruit which the Spirit gives us for the purpose of glorifying Christ with our lives (Galatians 5:22-23). Being filled with the Spirit is not evidenced by such counterfeits, but by a life that overflows with the Word of God in such a way that it spills over in praise, thanksgiving, and obedience to God.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Spirit-slain.html>

10. Visions / Dreams

Can God give visions to people today? Yes! Does God give visions to people today? Possibly. **Should we expect visions to be an ordinary occurrence? No.**

In many parts of the world, God seems to be using visions and dreams extensively. In areas where there is little or no gospel message available, and where people do not have Bibles, God is taking His message to people directly through dreams and visions. This is entirely consistent with the biblical example of visions being frequently used by God to reveal His truth to people in the early days of Christianity. If God desires to communicate His message to a person, He can use whatever means He finds necessary—a missionary, an angel, a vision, or a dream.

We must be careful when it comes to visions and the interpretation of visions. **We must keep in mind that the Bible is finished, and it tells us everything we need to know.** The key truth is that if God were to give a vision, it would agree completely with what He has already revealed in His Word.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/visions-Christian.html>

11. Signs and Wonders

As the Creator and Sustainer of all that is, God has the power to suspend natural laws in order to fulfill His purposes. Miracles were a part of the ministries of Moses, Elijah and Elisha, and of course Jesus and the apostles, and their miracles primarily served the purpose of confirming their message as being from God (Hebrews 2:3-4).

It is nobler in God's sight to believe without needing a miracle. Jesus visited the Samaritans, and "because of his words many more became believers" (John 4:41, emphasis added). Just a few verses later, Jesus rebukes the Galileans: "Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders . . . you will never believe" (John 4:48). Unlike the Samaritans, the people of Galilee required signs and wonders.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/signs-and-wonders.html>

Better than seeking after a new miracle is taking God at His Word. Simple faith is more pleasing to the Lord than a reliance on a dazzling sensory experience. "Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed'" (John 20:29).

Matthew 12:38-39 ³⁸Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." ³⁹He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

12. Seven Mountain Mandate

is an anti-biblical and damaging movement that has gained a following in some Charismatic and Pentecostal churches (and core to Kingdom Now theology). Those who follow the seven mountain mandate believe that, in order for Christ to return to earth, the church must take control of the seven major spheres of influence in society for the glory of Christ. Once the world has been made subject to the kingdom of God, Jesus will return and rule the world.

Here are the seven mountains, according to the seven mountain mandate: 1) Education, 2) Religion, 3) Family, 4) Business, 5) Government/Military, 6) Arts/Entertainment, 7) Media

13. Continuationism

Opposite of cessationism. "Continuationism is the belief that the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit taught in the Bible—such as prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues, healings, and miracles—have not ceased and are available for the believer today. Continuationism is the opposite of cessationism which

teaches that supernatural gifts have ceased either when the canon of Scripture was completed or at the death of the last apostle.”

<https://www.challies.com/articles/why-i-am-not-continuationist/>

14. Ecumenism

“the organized attempt to bring about the cooperation and unity among Christians.”

“a movement that promotes worldwide unity among all religions through greater cooperation.” For example, a Christian priest may invite a Muslim imam to speak in his pulpit, or a church may get together with a Hindu temple to hold a joint prayer service. **Defined this way, ecumenism is definitely wrong.** We are not to be “yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 6:14; see also Galatians 1:6–9). Light and darkness have no fellowship with each other.

First of all, are those we are joining with truly Christians in the biblical sense of the word? Many people and organizations reference the name of Jesus Christ and even state He is Lord and Savior yet clearly reject what the Bible says about Him. Obvious examples of this are Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses, who call themselves followers of Jesus Christ and claim to be “Christian” yet deny what the Bible declares concerning Christ’s nature and work. A not-so-obvious example is liberal Christianity. Liberal Christianity is found in almost every denomination, and, although it may seem Christian, it usually rejects several essential truths. Liberals often deny or diminish the inspiration and authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16), the exclusive nature of salvation in Christ (John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5), and the total dependence upon God’s grace, apart from human works, for salvation (Romans 3:24, 28; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8–9).

There is a major emphasis in our day on ecumenical unity among evangelicals and Roman Catholics. Those who promote such unity state that both groups are Christian and both are God-honoring systems of faith. But there are substantial differences between the two groups. Biblical Christianity and Roman Catholicism are two different religions that practice and believe different things about how one is saved, the authority of the Bible, the priesthood of believers, the nature of man, the work of Christ on the cross, etc. The list of irreconcilable differences between what the Bible says and what the Roman Catholic Church says make any joint mission between the two impossible.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/ecumenism-ecumenical.html>

15. Hillsong, Bethel, Jesus Culture, etc.

Probably most troubling is **Hillsong’s embrace of the Word of Faith movement.** From the Hillsong website: “We believe that God wants to heal and transform us so that we can live healthy and blessed lives in order to help others more effectively.” Going along with the teaching that God always wills to heal and that “blessed” equals “healthy” is the prosperity gospel, which adds that God wills to enrich us financially. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Hillsong-Church.html>

Further, it exists to convert existing churches, including biblical churches, into churches that conform to their ideology. Hillsong, while having similarities with charismatic and pentecostal churches, was actually founded on **Latter Rain** ideology, now known as the **New Apostolic Reformation**, and uses aggressive and unscrupulous tactics to take over churches.

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2016/03/17/why-hillsong-music-is-dangerous-for-your-church/>

That man-centered approach is a recurring theme throughout Hillsong’s global ministry empire. Their songs are often more about the ones singing than the One they’re singing to. **Every passage they preach is a promise of God’s blessing and favor for you.** And their altar calls emphasize an endless stream of temporal, personal benefits—breakthrough, healing, success, and prosperity.

<https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B161201/>

Here we have another song that is being used by IHOP, Bethel Church and other NAR establishments to try to paradigm shift people into the **"bridal" movement** (see reviews of lyrics to "Burning", "Obsession", "Sailed On" and "Undivided Focus"). God is not there to "romance" us.

<http://deceptioninthechurch.com/worshipsongratings.html#0star5>

The music is just an avenue to get them into their teaching. The music is popular and what they’re wanting to do is they’re wanting to draw people in, **“Oh, we’ve got good music. Jesus Culture, Hillsong, we’ve got good music,” they use that as an avenue to get people into their teaching. The Mormons do the same thing.** Mormonism...Mormons don’t approach you with a full-bore list of all

their heresies that they believe. They look very normal. They look Christian. They look very nice and they suck people in.

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/TM13-11>

16. Beth Moore

As beloved and likable as she is, it would be so much easier and more pleasant to jump on the Beth Bandwagon than to have to warn against her as a false teacher. But as Christians, no matter how much we love a certain teacher, our highest love and loyalty must always be to Christ and His Word first, which means we must reject anything – even a beloved teacher – that is at odds with Him and the Scriptures. Beth Moore’s teaching and behavior conflicts with Scripture in several ways. For these reasons it is my sad duty to recommend that you not follow Beth Moore or receive any teaching from her or anyone connected to Living Proof Ministries.

1) Beth Moore preaches to men

2) Beth Moore partners with and is being influenced by, false teachers

3) Beth Moore claims to receive direct, personal, extra-biblical revelation from God

Recently God spoke to me about capturing what He and I are calling “Sabbath moments.”

What God began to say to me about five years ago, and I’m telling you it sent me on such a trek with Him, that my head is still whirling over it.

He began to say to me, “I’m gonna tell you something right now, Beth; and boy, you write this one down. And you say it as often as I give you utterance to say it: ‘My Bride is paralyzed by unbelief. My Bride is paralyzed by unbelief.’” And He said, “Startin’ with you.”

Pick up any Beth Moore book or watch any video of her teaching, and count how many times she says, “I think...” or “I believe...” or bases her teaching on a personal experience or story rather than teaching what God’s word clearly says.

4) Beth Moore refuses correction

5) Beth Moore is heading toward affirming homosexuality

<https://michellelesley.com/2014/08/14/updated-five-reasons-its-time-to-start-exercising-moore-discernment/>

If Mrs. Moore is exercising the position of a Bible teacher, then she should be able to properly exegete Scripture. Unfortunately, she is guilty of frequent allegorization where she misapplies Scripture. To allegorize means to use a symbol as representing a more complex idea. The problem is that with allegorizing, Scripture can be made to say almost anything. Let's take a look at a few of the many examples of Beth Moore's improper biblical interpretive practices.

Scripture means what it means in context. Beth Moore needs to examine the context of Scripture, note what it actually says, and then stick to it. She should not take a word or phrase in Scripture, expand it, throw in a "spiritual" meaning not taught in the verses, then misapply it in a five step how-to-get-out-of-your-pit-of-depression pop psychology speech that is housed in Christian terminology. Proclaiming God's word is a very serious matter, and all Bible teachers should seek to be as faithful to Scripture as possible - lest we violate God's word and mislead his people.

What does Beth Moore teach? As I said before, she teaches many good things. However, it is not these that we are have to worry about. It is the blatant unbiblical teachings to which we now turn our attention. Here are a few of them.

Belief invites the power of God to flow

Beth Moore promotes contemplative prayer

Catholicism is part of the Christian Church

God Shows Beth Moore A Vision Of The Church

Whispers in the heart as revelation from God apparently are equal to Scripture

Beth Moore gets revelation knowledge direction from God

We must be very careful when listening to a teacher. Beth Moore, in my opinion, is not to be trusted to properly teach from the word of God. She is leading many astray with her approval of contemplative prayer, personal revelations, and faulty biblical exegesis. Yes, I know that many claim to have been helped by her. That is fine, but the experience of feeling helped is not where truth lies. Rather, it is God's word that is the standard of what is good and bad, not if we are helped through the world of pop psychology in Christian terminology. Therefore, I cannot endorse Beth Moore.

<https://carm.org/beth-moore>

Beth Moore goes beyond allegorical interpretation at times as she approaches the Bible through a mystical method of Bible reading known as Lectio Divina. This is an old heretical form of biblical interpretation taken from Roman Catholic mystics and often closely connected to contemplative prayer.
<http://www.deliveredbygrace.com/say-no-more-beth-moore/>

17. Sarah Young / Jesus Calling / Automatic Writing

Far and away the most troubling aspect of the book is its very premise—that Sarah Young hears from Jesus and then dutifully brings his messages to her readers. Jesus Calling makes the boldest, gutsiest, and, to my mind, most arrogant claim of any book ever to be considered Christian. There is no way to avoid her claim that she is communicating divine revelation, a claim that raises a host of questions and concerns, not the least of which is the doctrine of Scripture alone which assures us that the Bible and the Bible alone is sufficient to guide us in all matters of faith and practice.

She speaks for God.

She proclaims the insufficiency of the Bible.

Her deepest experience of God comes through a practice God does not endorse.

She is inspired by untrustworthy models.

She provides lesser revelation.

She mimics occult practices.

Her emphasis does not match the Bible's.

Her tone does not match the Bible's.

She generates confusion.

Her book has been corrected.

The point is clear: Jesus Calling is a book built upon a faulty premise and in that way a book that is dangerous and unworthy of our attention or affirmation. The great tragedy is that it is leading people away from God's means of grace that are so sweet and so satisfying, if only we will accept and embrace them.

<https://www.challies.com/articles/10-serious-problems-with-jesus-calling/>

18. Charismatic Window

The Charismatic Window is a metaphor for the way **nefarious or sub-biblical teaching enters into a church or an individual's mind because they are a "cautious continuationist," being open to the possibility of the continuance of the Apostolic Sign Gifts or new revelation.** One who doesn't want to automatically discount such claims are said to have "left open the Charismatic Window." This expression means that they are vulnerable to any such aberrant doctrine that will inevitably come through that window, because they are open to possibilities.

While many evangelicals won't countenance the more obvious excesses of the Charismatic movement and the type of spiritual chicanery that typifies the movement's more dramatic heretics, because they are open to continued revelation or Apostolic gifting, they are susceptible to many less-dramatic, more-subtle diversions from Biblical faith.

The expression is often used to explain how once-discerning people fell for a sub-christian teaching. Because they "left open the Charismatic Window" – given how quickly false doctrines and false teachers arise in the Downgrade – **no one person can discern new threats quickly enough to keep heresy at arms length unless their Charismatic Window is closed.**

This phrase draws parallels to Jude 1:4, "For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." The concept of a false teacher "creeping in unnoticed" is pivotal in understanding the meaning of the term, "Charismatic Window."

EXAMPLES

John Piper, an otherwise sound Biblical exegete, has repeatedly spoken with (as in, together at conferences) Beth Moore and even endorsed men (as well as women) listening to her preach. Moore repeatedly shares the supposed prophecies given her through divine revelation and encourages Contemplative Prayer. Piper has inadvertently linked himself with a notorious false teacher, no doubt unable to mark her as such because he wonders in his mind if maybe her prophecies really are true. In this case, a notorious false teacher crept through John Piper's open Charismatic Window.

Matt Chandler, an otherwise sound Biblical exegete, has a long list of troubling discernment problems, perhaps most notoriously promoting the material of Theosis heretic and Montanist, Ann Voskamp.

This travesty would not be occurring if Chandler hadn't left open the Charismatic Window, but being open to continued revelation, wasn't able to discern that Voskamp isn't "making love" to God.

A well-meaning Sunday School teacher is ordinarily not prone to fall for false doctrine, but when it comes to charismatic gifting, she doesn't want to "put God in a box." Whereas she found Biblical problems with the details contained in certain Heaven Tourism stories, she couldn't find error in The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven, and so she promoted it to her class. When the news broke that the young man recanted his story in heartfelt repentance, she had already led astray her students because she had left open the Charismatic Window, and should have discounted all such tales of divine revelation to begin with.

CLOSING THE WINDOW

"Closing the Charismatic Window" means embracing the historic position of Cessationism. Instead of having to discern each and every claim of divine revelation on its merits and therefore leaving yourself open to the possibility of missing one or being fooled by a particularly deceitful argument, cessationists have a "prove it" type attitude, resting assured on the promises that God's written Word in its 66 different books is sufficient for our spiritual instruction. Those who have shut the Charismatic Window typically do not fall for spiritual error or have false teachers creep in unawares, the same way that it is common for Charismatics or Continuationists.

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2016/10/18/polemics-terms-charismatic-window/>

Supplemental Materials to the Supplemental Materials *Hillsong, Bethel, Jesus Culture, etc.*

Probably most troubling is Hillsong's embrace of the Word of Faith movement. From the Hillsong website: "We believe that God wants to heal and transform us so that we can live healthy and blessed lives in order to help others more effectively." Going along with the teaching that God always wills to heal and that "blessed" equals "healthy" is the prosperity gospel, which adds that God wills to enrich us financially.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Hillsong-Church.html>

Further, it exists to convert existing churches, including biblical churches, into churches that conform to their ideology. Hillsong, while having similarities with charismatic and pentecostal churches, was actually founded on Latter Rain ideology, now known as the New Apostolic Reformation, and uses aggressive and unscrupulous tactics to take over churches.

For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. – Jude 1:4

Hillsong, through its attractive music, that has a form of godliness but denies His power (2 Tim 3:5), creeps its way into solid churches, deceptively turning people on to their ideology, drawing people to their "vision"—Brian Houston's "vision." A wide-ranging variety of music, some that may seem very solid theologically on the surface (even Satan masquerades as an angel of light, 2 Cor 11:14), and some that's blatantly shallow and even unbiblical, is the effective method of takeover. It's deceptive, and it's evil (Mark 13:22).

The New Apostolic Reformation is the driving force behind modern worship. They use a deceptive tactic that mixes a little bit of truth with error which gives their music the appearance of holiness. But the fact is much of the music that comes out of this demonic center of darkness is designed to empty your mind by the use of repetitive lyrics, sensual music and a fleshly experience that puts you in a state of hypnotic trance.

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2016/03/17/why-hillsong-music-is-dangerous-for-your-church/>

In Hillsong's spiritual economy, man has tremendous inherent worth. The individual replaces Christ as the central figure in God's redemptive plan. **Their own doctrinal statement says that the purpose of Christ's life, death, and resurrection was to "prove His victory and empower us for life."** The redemption of wretched sinners is not in view.

That man-centered approach is a recurring theme throughout Hillsong's global ministry empire. Their songs are often more about the ones singing than the One they're singing to. Every passage they preach is a promise of God's blessing and favor for you. And their altar calls emphasize an endless stream of temporal, personal benefits—breakthrough, healing, success, and prosperity.

Effectively, Hillsong's leaders seek to enable and empower a latent human condition. Their focus is primarily on the enormous potential we have to do great things and be great people. Hillsong's official website contains a gospel

presentation in which we are told that the main point of Christ's incarnation was to "show us our full potential . . . the wonderful potential of perfected humanity."

<https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B161201/~>

We heard from many readers who oppose Hillsong's theology, but still embrace and employ their music. The argument is that they can incorporate the best of Hillsong's worship music into their services without imbibing Hillsong's influence altogether.

We see two issues with that reasoning. First, while your personal discernment and spiritual maturity might be enough to guard against Hillsong wielding spiritual influence in your life, you can't be sure the same will be true for everyone in your church or under your authority. It's simply not safe to assume that your entire congregation will share your immunity to Hillsong's influence. In fact, wisdom would dictate that it is far better to look out for the weakest among you rather than risk exposing even one person to a potential snare.

The other factor to consider with regard to using Hillsong's worship music is not spiritual, but financial. Do you want to make even small contributions to their global ministry—especially if you disagree with them theologically?

Even if you only use their most biblical songs in your church, you're still helping to sustain and extend a ministry that—as we already saw in our series—does not consistently promote biblical views of God and man.

<https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B161209/~>

Why is this important? Because Bethel "Church" in Redding, California, and IHOP are, functionally, ground zero for the New Apostolic Reformation heresy. **Heresy. Not, "They just have a more expressive, contemporary style of worship,"** Not, "It's a secondary theological issue we can agree to disagree on." Heresy. Denial of the deity of Christ. Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Demonstrably false prophecy that the head of IHOP, Mike Bickle, has publicly rejoiced in (He estimates that 80% of IHOP's "prophecies" are false.) And that's just the tip of our metaphorical iceberg when it comes to the NAR.

IHOP and Bethel are, by biblical definition, not Christian organizations and certainly not Christian churches.

They are pagan centers of idol worship just as much as the Old Testament temples of Baal were. The only difference is that, instead of being creative and coming up with their own name for their god, they've stolen the name Jesus and blasphemously baptized their idol with that moniker.

The point in this whole debate is not the word "reckless". The point is that Christian churches should not have anything whatsoever to do with idol worshiping pagans as they approach God in worship. Yet Sunday after Sunday churches use Bethel music, Jesus Culture music, Hillsong music, and the like, in their worship of God.

<https://bereanresearch.org/gods-not-like-whatever-dude-about-the-way-hes-approached-in-worship/>

Bethel Music unashamedly promotes false doctrine. Let's be clear, all of the music that comes from this church are designed to draw people in and promote the message of Bethel Church. Under the leadership of Bill Johnson, the church promotes a message that is anti-gospel and cultish. Bethel is a New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) church that promotes nefarious theologies such as Word of Faith, Dominionism, Latter Rain, and Joel's Army.

The NAR is a movement that elevates experience above doctrinal truth. Often times you will see many with contradictory beliefs about the basic tenets of Christianity come together in prayer and worship. Bethel's pastor, Bill Johnson, who was labeled an Apostle by C. Peter Wagner, advocates for less Scriptural knowledge and promotes extra-biblical experiences as security for your relationship with God. He says in his book *When Heaven Invades Earth*:

Those who feel safe because of their intellectual grasp of Scriptures enjoy a false sense of security. None of us has a full grasp of Scripture, but we all 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 follow off the map—to go beyond what we know (Johnson, p. 76)

This is clearly a denial of the sufficiency of Scripture, and a promotion of extra-biblical revelation.

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2016/05/09/bethel-music-unfruitful-works-of-darkness/>

Another concern people have with Brian Houston is that he holds to heretical Word of Faith theology. This is bad news for Hillsong fans because the "good news" they should be hearing is not the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. Not even close. Hillsong's music is rife with the false prosperity/health and wealth gospel that saves no one. According to Bud Ahlheim of Pulpit & Pen, "The 'Jesus' proclaimed by Houston is not the Jesus of Scripture. And when you worship, or even participate with idolatry, it's nothing less than the worship of demons. (1 Corinthians 10:20)"

<https://bereanresearch.org/hillsong-heresy-goes-hollywood/>

TODD: Dr. MacArthur... (yelling) Dr. MacArthur...

JESUS CULTURE: Fill me up, fill me up...

TODD: Okay, alright, that's enough. Okay, I couldn't take it. That was about a minute and that was 12 fill me ups. This is wildly popular. Now this is the tricky part. Some of the Jesus Culture music is passable. I'm a parent, my child loves it. Am I concerned?

JOHN: Absolutely you're concerned. I mean, it's obviously, you know, it's the old clock that doesn't run is right twice a day. If they don't ever do anything that is acceptable, then you're not going to buy in to what isn't. I mean, it's just the greased slide.

That has nothing to do with Christianity, nothing to do with God. In fact, I'd be afraid to put my mind in neutral and start yelling out loud with that kind of sensual music, "Fill me up, fill me up, fill me up," among a group of non-believers who would go from being kind of normal non-believers living in the kingdom of darkness, to be demon possessed. I think you're inviting a spirit for sure, but it isn't the Spirit of God. And it has nothing to do with Christianity. Again this is paganism. This is the Kundalini Cult. You can look on the YouTube and see that kind of stuff. This is paganism. **This is what Hindus do, the mindlessness of this. And I think if you accept any of it, if you say, "Well, there's some good in it," you literally have left your young people open to demon powers. I would run from this so fast.**

TODD: This maybe sound silly to you but I see this stuff and I experience this stuff. **They've got a few songs, they maybe have 50 songs and there's a couple of them, there's nothing bad in them, and people will just say, "Well that one's okay, it doesn't hurt anything."** Does it hurt anything to bring their music in any way, shape, or form into my church, into my home, into my kid's ear buds?"

JUSTIN: **The music is just an avenue to get them into their teaching.** The music is popular and what they're wanting to do is they're wanting to draw people in, **"Oh, we've got good music. Jesus Culture, Hillsong, we've got good music," they use that as an avenue to get people into their teaching. The Mormons do the same thing. Mormonism...Mormons don't approach you with a full-bore list of all their heresies that they believe.** They look very normal. They look Christian. They look very nice and they suck people in. It's the same thing with this, it's to draw people in to their belief system. And it's sad that today theology and doctrine have almost become bad words. What we just saw there, that is a mark supposedly of spirituality. You know, it's a high mark, you're spiritual if you can...but it's totally opposite.

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/TM13-11>

The Naked Cowboy Appears at Hillsong Women's Conference

<https://www.piratechristian.com/museum-of-idolatry/2016/5/the-naked-cowboy-appears-at-hillsong-womens-conference>

Hillsong's Naked Cowboy is Back — Except Now it's Naked Santa!

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2016/12/21/hillsongs-naked-cowboy-is-back-except-now-its-naked-santa/>

Hillsong's "Sleazy Silent Night!"

<https://www.piratechristian.com/museum-of-idolatry/2015/12/hillsongs-sleazy-silent-night>

Hillsong Xmas Service "worship" Silent night

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QO0buyAM7uI>

Hillsong Parading Their Fleshly Principalities and Powers

<https://hillsongchurchwatch.com/2016/05/23/hillsong-parading-their-fleshly-principalities-and-powers/>

Hillsong's Austin Powers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBPEanp08YU>