**Dispelling A Dangerous Misrepresentation**

**Has Your Lost Dog Come Home?**

**Country song spun backwards**

 Barn that burned down rebuilds itself

 Pick-up truck starts first try

 Your neighbor actually returns your chain saw, and it works

 Your favorite song on the juke box plays every time someone drops money in it

 The woman you love with all your heart comes back

 Your lost dog comes home

Unfortunate picture of life painted by irresponsible spiritual pretenders

**Web MD**

**Personal problems that can cause stress**

1. **Your health**, especially if you have a chronic illness such as heart disease, diabetes, or arthritis
2. **Emotional problems**, such as anger you can't express, depression, grief, guilt, or low self-esteem
3. **Your relationships**, such as having problems with your relationships or feeling a lack of friendships or support in your life
4. **Major life changes**, such as dealing with the death of a parent or spouse, losing your job, getting married, or moving to a new city
5. **Stress in your family**, such as having a child, teen, or other family member who is under stress, or being a caregiver to a family member who is elderly or who has health problems
6. **Conflicts with your beliefs and values**. For example, you may value family life, but you may not be able to spend as much time with your family as you want.
7. **Social and job issues** that can cause stress
8. **Your surroundings**. Living in an area where overcrowding, crime, pollution, or noise is a problem can create chronic stress.
9. **Your social situation**. Not having enough money to cover your expenses, feeling lonely, or facing discrimination based on your race, gender, age, or sexual orientation can add stress to your life
10. **Your job**. Being unhappy with your work or finding your job too demanding can lead to chronic stress. Learn how to manage job stress.
11. **Unemployment**. Losing your job or not being able to find work can also add to your stress level.
12. **Post-traumatic stress**

You might require help dealing with stress if you have faced a life-threatening or traumatic event such as rape, a natural disaster, or war. These events can cause acute stress disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For more information, see the topic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

**The Judas goats begin to grave on our suffering.**

**Prosperity Theology Wikipedia**

 Prosperity theology (sometimes referred to as the prosperity gospel, the health and wealth gospel, or the gospel of success) is a religious belief among some Christians, who hold that financial blessing and physical well-being are always the will of God for them, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one's material wealth. Prosperity theology views the Bible as a contract between God and humans: **if humans have faith in God, he will deliver security and prosperity.**

 The doctrine emphasizes the importance of **personal empowerment**, proposing that it is God's will for his people to be happy. **The atonement (reconciliation with God) is interpreted to include the alleviation of sickness and poverty, which are viewed as curses to be broken by faith. This is believed to be achieved through donations of money, visualization, and positive confession.**

Benny Hinn

Kenneth Copeland

Joyce Meyer

Creflo Dollar

Eddie Long (Deceased)

Joel Osteen

**5 Errors of the Prosperity Gospel**

David W. Jones is professor of Christian ethics and Associate Dean for Graduate Program Administration, at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

1. The Abrahamic covenant is a means to material entitlement.

2. Jesus’s atonement extends to the “sin” of material poverty.

3. Christians give in order to gain material compensation from God.

4. Faith is a self-generated spiritual force that leads to prosperity.

5. Prayer is a tool to force God to grant prosperity.

**False Gospel**

 In light of Scripture, the prosperity gospel is fundamentally flawed. At bottom, it is a false gospel because of its faulty view of the relationship between God and man. Simply put, if the prosperity gospel is true, grace is obsolete, God is irrelevant, and man is the measure of all things. Whether they’re talking about the Abrahamic covenant, the atonement, giving, faith, or prayer, prosperity teachers turn the relationship between God and man into a quid pro quo transaction. As James Goff noted in a 1990 Christianity Today article, God is “reduced to a kind of ‘cosmic bellhop’ attending to the needs and desires of his creation.”

 This is a wholly inadequate and unbiblical view of the relationship between God and man.

**What does the Bible tell us about anxiety?**

**1 Peter**

 Author: The apostle Peter

 Audience: Gentile and Jewish believers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia,

 western Asia Minor and Bithynia

 Date: About AD 60 to 64

 Theme: Peter gives instructions on holy living for those suffering

 persecution.

First Peter has been characterized as a letter of suffering and persecution, of suffering and glory, of hope, of pilgrimage, of courage, and as a letter dealing with the true grace of God.

**1 Peter 5:1-11 (NIV)**

**To the Elders and the Flock**

 1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; **not pursuing dishonest gain**, but eager to serve; 3 **not lording it over those entrusted to you**, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

 5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

 **“God opposes the proud**

 **but shows favor to the humble.”**

 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

 10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

1. ( First) Humble yourselves under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.
2. (Then) Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.
3. Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.
4. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

**Real World Challenges to the Prosperity Proposition**

**Columbine Martyr**

**Atheist Complaint** (Christian Examiner)

HOLLYWOOD– Atheists haven't even seen I'm Not Ashamed, the new film about the life of Columbine massacre victim Rachel Joy Scott, but they're already objecting to its depiction of the teenager as a martyr for her faith in Christ.

**Martyrs Brother and friend rebuttal**

What is clear, however, is that Klebold and Harris saw Rachel as the enemy. According to Craig Scott, Rachel's brother, both of the boys knew her as a Christ-follower. "Eric and Dylan knew her, and that conversation happened," Craig Scott told THR, while admitting that the dialog at the end of the film is not verbatim. "There is audio tape of them calling her a 'stuck-up Christian bitch.' She may have died anyway, but in that moment, she was killed for her faith."

Costaldo, who was sitting with Rachel and who survived the shooting but was in a coma while police collected evidence, told his mother when he woke up that Klebold and Harris where yelling at Scott about her faith when she was executed.

 "They were yelling at her about God and do you believe in God. That was literally the last minute of her life," Costaldo's mother told Craig Scott in a conversation captured by NBC News for Dateline. He reiterated the account in 2012. Costaldo also claimed he was asked if he believed in God. He said he didn't and that is why he believes he was not shot again

**Estimates of World Martyrdom varies from 1,000/ year to 100,000/ year**

 **3/day 274/day**

 **1/8hrs 5/minute**

**Breitbart London**, by DONNA RACHEL EDMUNDS19 Sep 2015 ,

Every five minutes a Christian is martyred for their faith. According to Christian Freedom International, more than 200 million followers currently face persecution, making Christians the most persecuted faith group on the planet.

Christians face persecution in 105 of the world’s 196 countries.

**Hunger**

1. 870 million people in the world do not have enough to eat. This number has fallen by 130 million since 1990, but progress slowed after 2008.
2. One out of every four children in the world under the age of five is stunted.
3. Poor nutrition causes nearly half (45%) of preventable deaths in children under five years of age – 3.1 million children each year.
4. 66 million children attend classes hungry across the developing world, with 23 million in Africa alone.

**A Puzzling Paradox**

**Christianity grows under persecution Excel Sheet 1**

**Do we really think we are to live a life without threat or struggle knowing of Christ’s death on the cross?**

 **Luke 9:21-27**

**Jesus Predicts His Death**

 21 Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. 22 And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”

 23 Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and **take up their cross daily and follow me**. 24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. **25 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?** 26 Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

**What does it mean to, take up our cross daily and follow Jesus Christ?**

**How does prosperity theology align with the fates of the Apostles?**

* PETER and PAUL Paul was beheaded. Peter was crucified, upside down at his request, since he did not feel he was worthy to die the same way as his Lord.
* ANDREW is said to have been crucified.
* THOMAS he died when pierced through with the spears of four soldiers.
* PHILIP the proconsul had Philip arrested and cruelly put to death.
* MATTHEW was stabbed to death in Ethiopia.
* BARTHOLOMEW There are various accounts of how he met his.
* JAMES Josephus reported he was stoned and clubbed to death.
* SIMON THE ZEALOT was killed after refusing to sacrifice to the sun god.
* MATTHIAS Tradition sends him to Syria with Andrew and to death by burning.
* JOHN is the only one of the company generally thought to have died a natural death from old age. During Domitian's persecution in the middle 90's, he was exiled to the island of Patmos. There he is credited with writing the last book of the New Testament--the Revelation.

**Are we so busy seeking the world and the anxiety that unavoidably accompanies such pursuit that we would risk eternity for shiny bobbles?**

**James4: 13-17 Boasting About Tomorrow**

13 Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” 14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. 15 Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” 16 As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. 17 If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.

**Take heart Brothers and Sisters.**

**John 16:32-33 (NIV) But take heart!**

 32 “A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. 33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. **But take heart! I have overcome the world.”**

**John14: 15-18 Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit**

 15 “If you love me, keep my commands. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be[c] in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

**Matthew 16: I will build my church**

 15 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build my church, and the gates of Hell will not overcome it.**

**Who is the Church?**

**Bridgeway Bible Dictionary Studylight.org**

**God’s new community**

 The word which Jesus used and which has been translated ‘church’ meant originally a collection of people – a meeting, gathering or community. It was the word used for the Old Testament community of Israel, and was particularly suitable for the new community, the Christian church, that came into being on the day of Pentecost.

**The body of Christ**

 Christ and the church, being inseparably united, make up one complete whole, just as the head and the body together make up one complete person. Through his resurrection and ascension, Jesus Christ became head over the church and the source of its life and growth

**The local church**

 While the Bible sometimes speaks of the church as a timeless and universal community, more commonly it speaks of it as a group of Christians meeting together in a particular locality. This community is the church in that locality. It is the local expression, a sort of miniature, of the timeless universal church

**Who will the gates of Hell not overcome? US!!!!!!! US!!!!!!!**

1. We are human, a fact that can be intensely frustrating.
2. Most of us struggle with seeing through a glass dimly, knowing in part.
3. Uncertainty even among well intentioned believers leads to all sorts of anxiety.
4. I need to be fixed, the way I’m living stinks and I am afraid of where I’ll end up?”
5. I don’t know how to trust what I cannot see?
6. Let go of the world; listen for the still small voice.

(Paraphrase John 3:16-17)

16 For God so loves us that he gave his one and only Son, that if we believe in him we shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn us, but to save us through him.

**So, what do we do with the stress of life?**

**Health**

**Emotional problems**

**Our relationships**

**Major life changes**

**Stress in your family**

**Conflicts with your beliefs and values**

**Your surroundings**

**Your social situation**

**Your job**

**This is what we do with the stress of life!**

1. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. We don’t know when; whether in this life or the life to come but he will!
2. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. Not some of it, ALL of it!
3. Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. That’s Satan, he’s damned and heading for the hottest hot tub in creation.
4. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. The Lord will give us strength through the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit.
5. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

May The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

Amen