

Misled

(A book survey of Allen Parr's "Misled")

Cross Brand 8.6.25

The Power of Words

DO I REALLY HAVE THE POWER TO SPEAK THINGS INTO EXISTENCE?

I. THE POWER OF WORDS

In some Christian circles it's common to hear people speak about the power of words.

While these Christians probably mean well, behind their statements is the false belief that words have power to create or manifest something.

II. WHAT IS POSITIVE CONFESSION?

"Positive confession is the practice of saying aloud what you want to happen with the expectation that God will make it a reality."

III. ORIGINS OF THE POSITIVE CONFESSION MOVEMENT

"What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun." Ecclesiastes 1:9

In other words, many things that people claim are new are actually just something old that is being recycled.

Scholars debate the exact origins of Word of Faith theology, but it bears a striking resemblance to a secular teaching called New Thought, whose origins date back to the nineteenth century.

IV. WHY IS WORD OF FAITH THEOLOGY SO ATTRACTIVE?

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female. Genesis 1:26-27

Since we have been created in God's image, we have the same power and authority God possesses.

Because God used His words to create the universe out of nothing, we can do the same since we were created in his image.

God has given us dominion over this world.

God's attributes *communicable* and others *noncommunicable*.

Romans 4:17 As it is written: **I have made you the father of many nations**^[a]—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, the one who gives life to the dead and calls things into existence that do not exist., which says, "calls things into existence that do not exist."

This verse shows that *God* alone can speak things into existence. There is no mention of Christians sharing this divine ability.

V. THE LITTLE GODS DOCTRINE

In a sermon, televangelist Creflo Dollar promoted the foundational idea of the little gods doctrine: we are the same *kind* of being as God Himself.

DOLLAR: "If horses get together, they produce what?"

CONGREGATION: "Horses!"

DOLLAR: "If dogs get together, they produce what?"

CONGREGATION: "Dogs!"

DOLLAR: "If cats get together, they produce what?"

CONGREGATION: "Cats!"

DOLLAR: "So, if the Godhead says, 'Let us make man in our own image,' and everything produces after its own kind, then they produce what?"

CONGREGATION: "Gods!"

DOLLAR: "Gods. Little-g gods You're not human. The only human part of you is this flesh you're wearing."

He claims that we are gods who are only wearing human bodies.

Psalm 82:6 "I said, 'You are gods; you are all sons of the Most High.'"

We must interpret scripture correctly! Context and cross referencing

Context

Psalm 82: 1 God stands in the divine assembly; he pronounces judgment among the gods: ² "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?"
Selah"

Cross-references, which are passages with similar phrases, concepts, or themes.

“You are my witnesses”— this is the Lord’s declaration— “and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. No god was formed before me, and there will be none after me. Isaiah 43:10

This is what the LORD, the King of Israel and its Redeemer, the LORD of Armies, says: I am the first and I am the last. There is no God but me. Isaiah 44:6

For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth—as there are many “gods” and many “lords”— ⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father. All things are from him, and we exist for him. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ. All things are through him, and we exist through him. 1 Corinthians 8:5-6

VI. PROBLEMS WITH POSITIVE CONFESSION

Problem #1: A Misunderstanding of Scripture

Dear friend, I pray that you are prospering in every way and are in good health, just as your whole life is going well. 3 John 2

Word of Faith proponents turn this scripture into a promise from God for prosperity and good health.

Problem #2: A Misunderstanding of Faith

In essence, *faith* is redefined from “a trust in a holy and sovereign God” to “a way of controlling God to give us what we want.”

Problem #3: A Misunderstanding of Reality

Positive confession proponents have a difficult time accepting the reality that not only is life tough but the Bible promises that we will experience suffering and hardship.

“Why, my soul, are you so dejected? Why are you in such turmoil? Put your hope in God, for I will still praise him, my Savior and my God. I will say to God, my rock, “Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about in sorrow because of the enemy’s oppression?” Psalm 42:5, 9

Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never allow the righteous to be shaken. Psalm 55:22

VII. WHAT ABOUT MANIFESTATION?

Proponents of manifestation believe that if you think positively enough about something, you can manifest it into existence. If you believe something in your heart hard enough, it will come true.

Manifestation steals the glory from God and places it on the person doing the manifesting.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. James 1:17

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6

A person's heart plans his way, but the LORD determines his steps.
Proverbs 16:9

Many plans are in a person's heart, but the Lord's decree will prevail.
Proverbs 19:21

Manifestation assumes we know what's best for us without consulting the God who knows all.

Manifestation often uses concepts like meditation and mantras to bring about a desired result.

The Bible clearly encourages us to meditate, the *object* of our meditation is critical. Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things. Philippians 4:8).

VIII. A BIBLICAL APPROACH TO THE POWER OF WORDS

Our Words Can Build Others Up

No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear.
Ephesians 4:29

But encourage each other daily, while it is still called **today**, so that none of you is hardened by sin's deception. Hebrews 3:13

not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching. Hebrews 10:25

Our Words Can Intercede for Others

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect. James 5:16

Our Words Can Advise Others

Listen to counsel and receive instruction so that you may be wise later in life. Proverbs 19:20

Our Words Can Heal Others

There is one who speaks rashly, like a piercing sword; but the tongue of the wise brings healing. Proverbs 12:18