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VICTORY

April 2014

Facing 23 Years in Prison:

Jon Ponder saw his life change dramatically after a prison chaplain gave him two things—a Bible and Kenneth and Gloria Copeland's devotional, *Pursuit of His Presence*.

.....
Find out what happened next!
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The
Prosperous
Soul *by Gloria Copeland*

A War Only
the Church
Can Win
by Kenneth Copeland

Rick Renner
Keith Moore

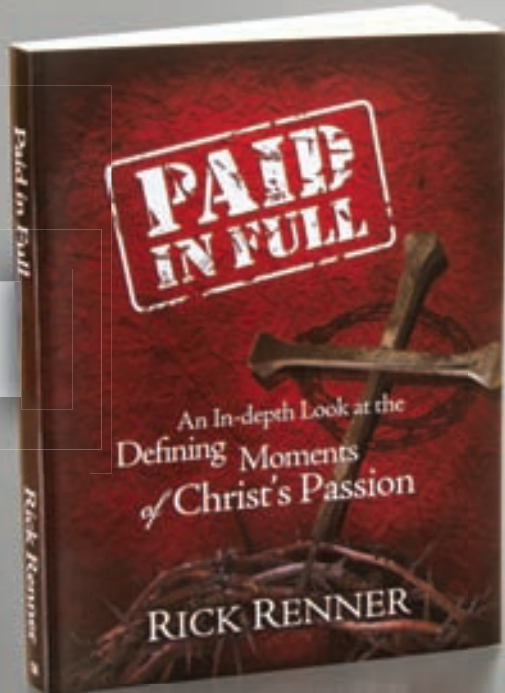
Points to Get
You There

Questions
& Answers

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Take another look at Jesus' final hours



Read an excerpt
{ page 24 }

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Kenneth & Gloria

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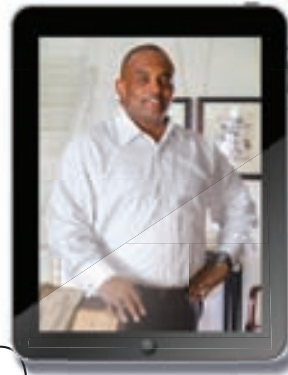


A War Only the Church Can Win

by Kenneth Copeland

The war on poverty from the 1960s was not a war the American government, nor any other government in the world, could win, because poverty isn't a *financial* problem—it's a *spiritual* problem.

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Everything's Going to Be All Right

by Melanie Henry

At 38, Jon Ponder faced 23 years in federal prison. Addicted to multiple drugs, including heroin and cocaine, he was full of rage and prone to violence. Then in solitary confinement, Jon met Jesus and his life was forever changed.

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Set Your Angels Free

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No matter what kind of problem you are facing, God has promised to deliver you. And one way He does it is through angels.

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Jesus' Final Words

by Rick Renner

Jesus' last words to His disciples revolved around the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. That's how serious this subject was to Jesus!

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The Prosperous Soul

by Gloria Copeland

Spending time in God's Word is the primary key to our success as believers. Walking in the truth of the Word is what causes our souls to prosper.

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 **Spanish**

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by *Kenneth
Copeland*

In the 1960s, the United States government launched a war on poverty. It was officially declared by President Lyndon Johnson, and at the time it must have seemed like a good idea to many people—both Democrats and Republicans.

There was just one problem:

It was not a war the American government, or any other government in the world, could win.



a WAR

ONLY THE Church CAN WIN



T

oday, the percentage of people living in poverty in this nation is almost identical to what it was in the '60s because poverty isn't a financial problem. It's a spiritual problem. It can't be solved by politics or conquered by man-made programs.

You can throw all the money you want at it and you won't get rid of it. In fact, you're likely to make it worse because the devil is the driving force behind it, and he uses money as leverage and power. He's figured out that if he can get people to look to something other than God to meet their needs (he doesn't care if it's welfare or Wall Street) he can control them...and control is what the devil is all about.

That's the reason God doesn't want His people to be financially dependent on anything or anyone in this fallen world order. He doesn't want you looking to the government as the source of your prosperity. He doesn't want you looking to your rich Uncle Charlie. He doesn't even want you looking to the company where you work.

God wants you to be dependent only upon Him, because only He can set you free from the devil's control and prosper you—regardless of what's happening in the world's economy.

My parents found this out in the 1930s during the Depression. The economy was miserable all

over the nation back then, but in West Texas where they lived, it was particularly bad. In those days, West Texas was a hard place to make a living—even when times were good. The primary source of revenue was dirt farming and no one had any irrigation. Even a minor drought could cause major problems. So you can imagine what it was like from 1931 to 1941 when hardly any rain fell there at all.

During those 10 years the Texas Panhandle, along with Oklahoma and New Mexico, became the great Dust Bowl. Sandstorms got so bad that people died in them. Their lungs got full of dust and they couldn't breathe. If that wasn't enough, job opportunities—which had already been scarce—dried up as well and people left in droves.

Mama and Daddy didn't know much about divine prosperity in those days but they loved The LORD. They knew He was their Source, so in their wedding vows they committed to tithe on every dime they made for the rest of their lives.

All through the Depression my dad was never without a job for more than a day. If one job played out, he and my mother would catch hands and pray for another one. "I'd stand at the door and watch him go down the road until he was completely out of sight," my mother told me. "Then I'd

poverty

You can throw all the money you want at it and you won't get rid of it.

In fact, you're likely to make it worse because the devil is the driving force behind it.

go about my chores all day just praising and worshiping God."

Every time, in less than 24 hours my father would find employment. God would direct him, show him where to go and get him jobs—*good ones*—when there weren't any to be found. Talk about winning a war on poverty! In the worst times the country has ever seen, while others were looking to the government or someone else in the world to meet their needs, my parents looked to God, kept tithing and were BLESSED.

Keeping Poor People Poor

"Well, Brother Copeland, I'm glad things worked out so well for your parents, but surely you don't think everyone should follow their example. Surely you're not suggesting that God wants people who are genuinely poor to be givers."

No, I'm not *suggesting* it. I'm

It's the devil who came up with the idea that a poor man shouldn't be expected to give.

It's the way he keeps poor people poor.

saying it outright because it's in the Bible. Luke 6:38 says to both rich and poor alike, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

It's the devil who came up with

the idea that a poor man shouldn't be expected to give. It's the way he keeps poor people poor. God wants everyone to tithe and give offerings so He can make them rich.

Jesus proved this by the way He responded to the destitute widow when she gave her offering at the Temple. Because He always did the will of His Father, if God didn't

want poor people to give, Jesus would have objected when that widow threw her last two pennies into the offering bucket. He would have said something like, "Hold on there, sweetheart. God doesn't need your money. There are plenty of rich people around here to finance His work. You just keep those two pennies for yourself because you're going to need them."

But Jesus didn't say any such thing. Instead, he blessed her offering and called it the biggest one in the bucket. He told His disciples: "Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12:43-44).

One of the things I'm looking forward to when I get to heaven and they open the archives of Church history, is finding out what ultimately happened to that widow. She probably became a rich real-estate tycoon and ended up as one of the biggest givers in the early New Testament Church. What makes me think so?

She tapped into the revelation Paul preached to the believers in Macedonia! A deeply impoverished bunch, those saints actually had to beg Paul to let them contribute to the offering he was receiving for another group of believers. When Paul agreed to accept their gifts, God revealed this to him: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully... for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, *always having all sufficiency* in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:6-8, emphasis mine).

According to *The Amplified Bible*, *having all sufficiency in all things* means "possessing enough to require

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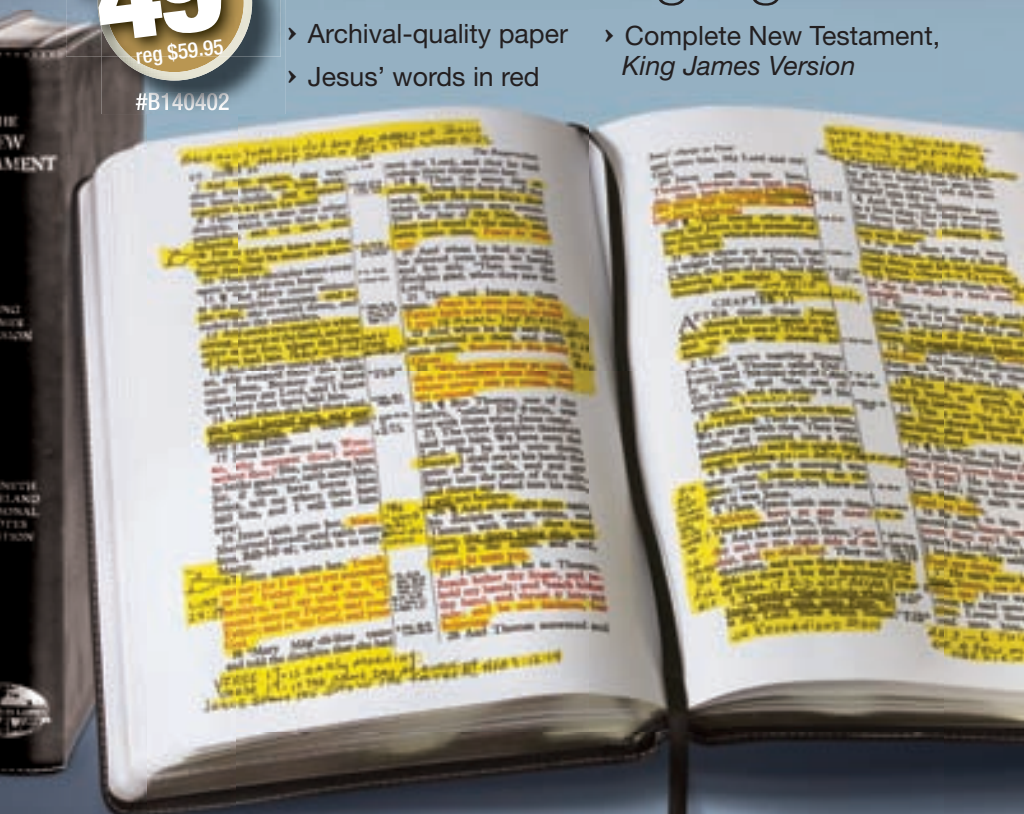
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Enough for every good work

When Ken and I were first learning to walk in faith for prosperity, more than 45 years ago, we didn't know very much of God's Word yet. We received our revelation piece by piece. Every time we'd learn something new, we'd put it into practice.

Actually, it's much easier for us now to walk in prosperity than it was back then. Today, we have to believe for millions of dollars just to pay our TV bills. But that's not nearly as challenging as it was to believe God back then for food on the table. During those days I often had to pray in the spirit just to pay my way out at the grocery store. That was the hardest time of all because we were just learning.

You have to grow in these things. If you're just now hearing that God wants you to prosper, you probably won't be able to get a million dollars in cash by this time next week.

Why? Because your faith isn't up to that yet. What you need to do is start right where you are. Start believing God for rent money. Start believing God to buy groceries. Start believing and then increase.

That's what we did. We just kept growing. We

kept listening to God and walking in the faith that we had, and it grew bigger. And we kept tithing and giving!

What's important is to start now. Don't wait until next month. If you want a change, make a change. Start believing God for the things you need today. Start thanking Him for them. Tell the devil you're out from under his curse. Grab hold of the Word of God and don't let go.

If you'll do that and stay with it, and continue to do what God tells you, you'll eventually have a surplus of prosperity so that not only can you pay your bills, but you can also have the capacity to give into every good work! 📖

Speak the Word

God makes all grace abound toward me. I always have all sufficiency in all things. I abound to every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8

no aid or support and furnished in abundance for every good work and charitable donation." I believe that's what the widow expected to receive from God in return for her giving, and that's what she got.

The \$35,000 Rice Bowl

"But the New Testament hadn't been written when the widow gave her two pennies!" you might say. "How did she know what God would do for her?"

She had plenty of Old Testament scriptures to base her faith on. Verses such as:

"There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself." (Proverbs 11:24-25, *New King James Version*)

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Malachi 3:10)

"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." (Proverbs 3:9-10)

Personally, I'm persuaded this widow had so much faith in those verses that she was more than just *willing* to give, she was *determined* to give. I think she marched up to the offering bucket with such an attitude of defiant confidence no one would have dared try to stop her.

She was probably a lot like the poor widow Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho encountered at his church in Korea some years ago. As he tells it, she came forward during offering time carrying her rice bowl and boldly put

it on the altar. Dr. Cho knew that rice bowl could mean the difference between eating and starving for someone as poor as she was, so he tried to give it back to her.

"Who do you think you are to interfere with my offering?" she said. "This rice bowl is mine and I'll do with it whatever God tells me."

As Dr. Cho stepped aside, properly chastened by her rebuke ("I needed it!" he said later), a wealthy man in the congregation jumped out of his seat and ran up to the woman. He'd been watching her, and through her giving she'd taught him something that changed his life. "The LORD just told me to pay you \$35,000 for that rice bowl," he said to her.

"OK," she replied.

In an instant, that woman went from poverty to wealth.

"But Brother Copeland," you might say, "what if the rich man hadn't obeyed? How would God have prospered such a poor woman? It's not like He can dump resources out of heaven."

Yes, He can! Haven't you ever heard about the manna the Israelites ate in the wilderness? God dumped enough of it out of heaven to feed 2.5 million people every day. He doesn't have to depend on this earth for resources. He has all spiritual resources in heavenly places at His disposal—and if He needs more, He can create them.

Go to God First

My friend, God is rich, rich, rich... and if you are born again, as a joint heir with Christ, all His resources belong to you. This isn't just religion, it's New Testament reality! When Jesus went to the cross, He totally defeated poverty on your behalf once and for all. As 2 Corinthians 8:9 says, "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

Notice that verse doesn't say He did it so you would just have your needs met. It says He became poor so that you might be *rich*! What's more, 2 Corinthians 9:8 tells us how

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such a thing is possible. It says: "God is able to make all grace (every favor and earthly blessing) come to you in abundance, so that you may always and under all circumstances and whatever the need be self-sufficient [possessing enough to require no aid or support and furnished in abundance for every good work and charitable donation]" (AMP).

This is God's will for you! He doesn't want you having to go to the government for finances. He doesn't want you having to borrow money from the bank. He Himself wants to supply you with more than enough for every good work, so that when the pastor announces, "We're going to build a new church building," you don't have to say, "I can only give a little." You can say, "I'll pay for the north wing."

Sadly, most believers can't even imagine such a thing. They look at themselves, their background, their educational level or whatever, and think it would be impossible. "Not even God could get that kind of money to me," they say. "It would be too hard."

But that's an absolutely unscriptural statement! Nothing is too hard for God. He is able to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20). The only reason we think things are too hard for God is because they're too hard for us.

Let's get rid of such thinking. Let's stop limiting God to what we can figure out with our finite, human brains. According to the Bible, "With God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37), and "all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). So

let's get our eyes off ourselves and everything else in this natural world order, put them on God and simply believe.

To do this, of course, we must renew our mind to the point where we go to God first concerning our finances. We don't go to the bank first, and Uncle Charlie second, and then to Grandma who tells us we should pray about it. No! Prayer should be the place where we start. We're children of Almighty God and He owns everything in heaven and earth. We're joint heirs with Jesus and He has been appointed heir of all those things. In Christ, we're not just guardians of God's vast resources, we're co-owners. How can someone who's joint owner of the entire universe be worried about paying the rent?

That doesn't even make sense!

I'll tell you what does make sense, though. It makes sense for you and me and every other believer to have all sufficiency in all things. It makes sense for us to abound, not just enough to pay our bills but to do every good work.

This has always been the heart of God: "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes..." (1 Samuel 2:8). That's something that, try as they may, the governments in this fallen world order can't do. It's up to us as the Church of The LORD Jesus Christ to receive the resources God has made available to us and launch a war on poverty that's the real thing. It's up to us to take a stand on the victory Jesus has already won and put that poverty spirit where it belongs—under our feet! 📌



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by
Melanie
Henry

Everything's Going to Be

ALL RIGHT

Lights from the Las Vegas strip glowed in the distance as the *whup whup whup* of helicopter blades overhead sent Jon Ponder's hammering heart into overdrive. Jon squinted his eyes against the glare of the searchlight that had him focused in its crosshairs. Flashing police lights strobed and sirens screamed. Police dogs barked, lunging on their leashes.

G“Get out of the driver's seat!” The booming voice sounded like God to Jon's rattled brain. Eyes blinded and head throbbing, he climbed out of his car.

“Raise your hands!”

Jon lifted his hands.

“Get on your knees!”

Jon dropped to his knees.

“On the ground!”

Jon fell forward face down, spread eagle on the ground, as someone pulled his hands behind his back, snapping handcuffs in place.

“You have the right to remain silent....”

It was a good thing

Jon was in handcuffs. By the time they got him to jail the fury he'd carried around since he was a kid had erupted into a raging wildfire.

Fighting and kicking, he went after anyone who came near him. Despite his drunken stupor and drug-induced high, he knew they had him cold on a string of bank robberies.

At 38 years old, he was facing 23 years in federal prison.

Jon Ponder had nothing left to lose. Already

prone to violence, he was out of control when the door opened and a man he'd never seen before walked into the room. The man was Caucasian, in his 50s, graying and with eyes the color of the deep blue sea.

“
I was so
violent they
put me
in solitary
confinement
while I
waited for
my court
date.”

Jon looked at the name on his badge. He was Special Agent Richard Beasley, the FBI agent who'd tracked him down and arrested him. The moment he stepped into the room, something washed over Jon. It wasn't a feeling

he'd often experienced.

Peace.

No one said a word, but Jon felt as though that booming voice spoke to every cell in his quivering body.

Everything's going to be all right.

“At that point in my life, nothing looked like it would ever be all right again,” Jon recalls. “I smoked three packs a day and was addicted to multiple drugs, including heroin and cocaine. I was so violent they put me in solitary confinement while I waited for my court date. The withdrawal was awful.

“One day the chaplain opened the food slot into

“His [Kenneth Copeland’s] materials changed my life and through our ministry, *many ex-gang members are reading them.*”

“Read Through the Bible in a Year Plan” written by Marilyn Hickey, and used by permission.

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

APRIL

		Old Testament	New Testament
Tue	1	Deut. 34; Josh. 1	Acts 15
Wed	2	Josh. 2-4	Acts 16-17
Thu	3	Josh. 5-6	Acts 18
Fri	4	Josh. 7-8	Acts 19
Sat	5	Josh. 9-10	Acts 20
Sun	6	Josh. 11-12	Acts 21
Mon	7	Josh. 13-14	Acts 22
Tue	8	Josh. 15	Acts 23
Wed	9	Josh. 16-18	Acts 24-25
Thu	10	Josh. 19-20	Acts 26
Fri	11	Josh. 21-22	Acts 27
Sat	12	Josh. 23-24	Acts 28
Sun	13	Jdgs. 1-2	Rom. 1
Mon	14	Jdgs. 3-4	Rom. 2
Tue	15	Jdgs. 5-6	Rom. 3
Wed	16	Jdgs. 7-9	Rom. 4-5
Thu	17	Jdgs. 10-11	Rom. 6
Fri	18	Jdgs. 12-13	Rom. 7
Sat	19	Jdgs. 14-15	Rom. 8
Sun	20	Jdgs. 16-17	Rom. 9
Mon	21	Jdgs. 18-19	Rom. 10
Tue	22	Jdgs. 20-21	Rom. 11
Wed	23	Ruth 1-3	Rom. 12-13
Thu	24	Ruth 4; 1 Sam. 1	Rom. 14
Fri	25	1 Sam. 2-3	Rom. 15
Sat	26	1 Sam. 4-5	Rom. 16
Sun	27	1 Sam. 6-7	1 Cor. 1
Mon	28	1 Sam. 8-9	1 Cor. 2
Tue	29	1 Sam. 10-11	1 Cor. 3
Wed	30	1 Sam. 12-14	1 Cor. 4-5

my cell and said, ‘Jesus loves you!’ I screamed, ‘Get away from me!’ Before he left, he dropped a Bible through the slot. I was furious and had no intention of reading it, but after two weeks I was so bored I picked up the Bible and started reading the New Testament.

“I grew up on the streets of New York City, one of six kids whose dad walked out on us,” Jon explained. “Our mother was strong, but she wasn’t able to keep us out of gangs and off the streets. In the summer we visited our grandmother, Madea, in Mississippi. Reading the New Testament brought back memories of going to church with her and hearing stories about blind Bartimaeus, the woman at the well and the woman with the issue of blood.

“After a couple of weeks the chaplain opened the food slot again and said, ‘Jesus loves you.’ This time he dropped another book through the slot. It was *Pursuit of His Presence* by Kenneth and Gloria Copeland. I turned to that day’s date and read the message. It was as though it had been written just for me.

“As I read that book and the Bible, the strangest thing happened. The anger which had been my constant companion for so many years dissolved. Alone in a prison cell, I was aware that Jesus was with me. Through his book, Brother Copeland was with me as well.”

The Power of Forgiveness

One morning another inmate was getting discharged. Passing by Jon’s cell, he said, “Hey, I can’t take this with me. Can I give it to you, Ponder?” He passed a little transistor radio with one ear bud through the slot. Lying on his bunk, Jon tried to

find a station but the radio could only pick up one signal: KSOS 90.5—a Christian station.

Jon Ponder didn’t need anyone to tell him how bad he was. That was old news. He’d started drinking, using drugs and stealing at the tender age of 12. Detectives had come to his high school and arrested him for armed robbery. He had children he didn’t really know. He was a functioning addict and a career criminal.

Jon knew he was a sinner. No surprise there. What came as a shock were the stories the radio DJ told about God’s forgiveness. They broke him until he fell on the floor weeping.

God could forgive...him?

God *would* forgive him?

He crawled into his bunk and fell asleep while listening to the radio. When he awoke at 2 a.m., Billy Graham was preaching on the prodigal son. Jon heard Graham say, “Jesus wants to be the Lord of your life.”

At that, Jon stood up and prayed the sinner’s prayer, accepting Jesus as his Savior. There in solitary confinement, he became a new creature in Christ. The seeds that Madea had planted more than 40 years earlier were finally taking root.

During the long months in solitary confinement, Jon fed constantly on the Word of God. When the time came for sentencing, the U.S. marshals took him in shackles to the courthouse. Waiting in a stainless steel cell, Jon fell on the floor and prayed.

“God, I know You’re real,” he said. “I’ve experienced You in my cell. I want You to know that from this day forward I will spend every waking moment serving You. And I’ll serve every day of the time I’m sentenced

to serve. All I ask is that You climb into the robe of that judge and let my sentence come from You.”

Stepping into the courtroom, Jon felt that peace, which he now recognized as the presence of God.

The judge asked if Jon had anything to say.

He stood and spoke from his heart. When he finished he said, “I will spend every waking moment improving the caliber of who I am.”

“Mr. Ponder,” the judge said, “I’ve been on the bench for more than 22 years and I’ve never heard anyone say they’ll do what you’re saying. If you do even half of what you’ve said, you’ll walk out of prison a transformed man.”

Then, looking directly at Jon, the judge said: “I don’t know why I’m doing this, but I sentence you to six years in federal prison.”

Six years!

What could have been a maximum sentence of 23 years in federal prison had miraculously been reduced to six years! Jon knew it was the intervention of God. He had, indeed, climbed into that judge’s robe and meted out a sentence that came from Him.

Life on the Line

“I was sent to United States Penitentiary Allenwood, a maximum security prison in Pennsylvania,” Jon explains. “I’d been on the wrong side of the law long enough to know that the reality of a maximum security prison was a thousand times worse than it’s portrayed on television. I was in prison with about 950 Muslims. In prison you have to be affiliated with a group to survive. You can associate yourself with the Crips, the Bloods, the Aryan Nation or whatever, but if you don’t pick one you will face consequences.

“I hadn’t been there long when the prisoners in power asked who I wanted to run with. I’d seen guys stabbed to death for not making that decision, and I knew that without a group my life was in jeopardy. But I’d made a promise to God and I had to walk it out in prison. How could I

lend my name and my loyalty to one of those groups?”

Standing before a table of 20 of the most dangerous prisoners, Jon said, “This is not the life I live. I’m a Christian. Do not call me back to this table unless it’s to talk about Jesus Christ or how you can improve your life. I know the rules of the game. If I need to die for what I believe, let’s get it over with.”

Almost certain his next step would be his last, Jon turned his back on the men and walked away. Later, in the chow hall, the only place to sit was with those same men.

I’m going to die, Jon thought as he slipped into the chair. Danger charged the air like an electrical

storm. Jon bowed his head and prayed. They left him alone.

Loneliness was like a prison of its own and mail call was the hardest. Jon not only didn’t get visitors, the mail stopped coming. Many times he lay in his bunk and wept. “Lord, You’re all I’ve got,” he said.

That’s right. And I’m all you need.

Then the Christians in the prison rallied around him. Men serving 20- to 30-year sentences taught him the Word of God. They taught him to pray. They mentored him on how to be a godly man. He attended chapel services and participated in Bible studies.

In time, he became part of the chapel leadership and helped lead Bible studies. He also conducted small



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“Whenever I hear Brother Copeland’s voice, it reminds me of all those months *in solitary confinement when it was Jesus, Kenneth Copeland and me.*”

groups. Jon wasn’t in prison, he was in Bible college—making the most of every day. After a couple of years, the men who’d demanded that he choose a group started coming to him.

“Hey Jon, my little brother was in a car wreck. Would you pray for him?”

“Ponder, my mother had a heart attack. Would you pray for her?”

Jon never caused any trouble and earned points for good behavior. By 2007, three years after his arrest, he was transferred to a medium security prison in Sheridan, Ore. He planted himself in the prison church there and threw himself into the work of the gospel.

Four months before his release, Jon asked God, “What do You want me to do when I go home?”

Son, you’re not going home, the Lord said. You’re being sent. There’s a difference. Remember the day when you got arrested? Remember that searchlight? That was My light, the same light that shone on Saul when he transformed into Paul.

Remember when you were told to get out of the driver’s seat? That was Me showing you that you had to get out of the driver’s seat of your life. Remember when you were told to raise your hands? That was Me showing you the power of praise and submission. Remember when you were told to get on your knees? That was Me showing you the position of humility.

Remember when you were told to lay face down on the ground? That was Me showing you how to live the rest of your life. You’re being sent back to Las Vegas, to a city where the people are in bondage.

Life as a Mission Field

When his sentence had been served, Jon was released to a federal halfway house. “We were heading toward Las Vegas at about 6 a.m. and

I saw the strip lit up,” Jon remembers. “When I saw that city, I just wept. I’d wreaked havoc there, and now it was my mission field.

“The next day I had a visitor. It was Special Agent Richard Beasley, the man who had taken me into custody. I looked into his eyes and now understood why I felt such peace in his presence. It was the anointing; he carried the presence of God.”

“Welcome home, Jon,” Beasley said. “I want you to know that I’ve been praying for you. God called me to the FBI, in part, for you.”

As both men wept, Jon knew he had a friend for life. Jon also knew what he would have to do to fulfill the call of God on his life. First and foremost, he had to get in a good local church where he could grow under strong leaders. He found a home at the International Church of Las Vegas. Next, he had to find a job and pay off his fees and fines.

Then, he would start a program to help ex-offenders.

The other desire of his heart was to marry a godly woman. He left that one up to the Lord.

By 2009, with the support of a team of pastors, Jon began a ministry called Hope for Prisoners, helping ex-offenders successfully reintegrate into the community. When the ministry was invited to participate in a \$1.5 million grant, it seemed like a dream come true. Sitting at the meeting, ready to sign the papers, Jon was surprised when the Lord told him to get up and walk away.

Walking away from nearly \$600,000 wasn’t a challenge for someone who’d walked away from gangs and prison protection.

“The Lord didn’t want us to look like

the rest of the world,” Jon recalls. “He didn’t want us to work with agencies whose goal is money. He wanted us to work with His people, those He had called into the justice system.

“We have a very unique mentoring program. Our mentoring team consists of pastors and leaders from churches across Southern Nevada as well as a team of volunteer police officers. God is moving our reentry community into uncharted territory. When you have the church partnering with law enforcement to mentor ex-offenders, it truly is new wineskin.”

Through Hope for Prisoners, Jon is also passing on to others the help God sent to him through Kenneth Copeland. “His materials changed my life and through our ministry, many ex-gang members are reading them. Whenever I hear Brother Copeland’s voice, it reminds me of all those months in solitary confinement when it was Jesus, Kenneth Copeland and me. He is one of my spiritual fathers.”

Today Jon Ponder’s life has been transformed by the Word of God. He’s not only fulfilling his call to ministry, he’s married to Jamie, the godly woman of his dreams. They are raising three precious children together, 14-year-old Jayden, 2-year-old Promise and 10-month-old Liberty.

During his years in prison, Jon used to pray for restoration with all of his children. Now, God is answering those prayers. In addition, he has led his siblings to the Lord.

What once seemed impossible has happened to Jon, and he shares the good news with others every chance he gets. It doesn’t matter how bad your situation might be, if you turn to God with your whole heart, *everything’s going to be all right.* ❶

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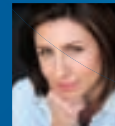
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- 9:30 a.m. Kellie Copeland Swisher
- 2 p.m. Dr. Stephen Swisher
- 6:30-7 p.m. Pre-Service Prayer with Lyndsey Swisher
- 7 p.m. Kenneth Copeland

SATURDAY

- 8-9 a.m. Coffee & Tea Partner Fellowship
- 9-9:30 a.m. Pre-Service Prayer with Lyndsey Swisher
- 9:30 a.m. Message with Dr. Stephen & Kellie Swisher
- 1 p.m. Healing Service with Dr. Stephen & Kellie Swisher

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'Take Your Healing by Faith'

In November I got a cold. I took medicine but the cough got very painful. Pneumonia started. My faith was fading and fear came. Then, at my mother's I saw an old copy of your magazine—I think it was from 2006. There was a big picture of Gloria and it was written: "Take your healing by faith." The article was not long but it was simple and clear. I had to learn to trust God 100 percent. When I finished reading the article, I prayed and made a step that I never regretted. I believed His Word! I said: "Lord, I believe Your Word that I am well. And you, Satan, take your diseases and get out of my house. My family is well! My Daddy said so! There is no place for you in my house!" Since that time my family hasn't gotten ill. I learned not to let diseases overcome my family. We have one medicine when somebody sneezes and coughs. We say: "I am well in Jesus' Name!"
T.T. | Ukraine

Esther D.,
prayer
minister



YOUR VOICE. YOUR VICTORY. YOUR MINISTRY.

GoodNewsGazette

"Ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee." (Exodus 23:25)

My Prayers Were Confirmed

The Lord used the opening sentences of the Branson Victory Campaign to promise me that my children and husband will walk in full revelation of God's love.

I had been praying and confessing this over them,

along with the favor of God going before them, for some time now. When in the first few moments of the meeting Kenneth said, "This is for the mother who has been praying..." I took it and I will continue to stand for it until I see it in full manifestation. I got so excited, I kept telling the angels, "Go do what the Lord has instructed you!" I

often miss this part of the meeting because I join via Internet and usually get interrupted several times, but not last night. God is so good and He did it all for me. I know you will get this testimony from many other moms out there, but I knew I had to tell you mine.

Michelle S.
Double Oak, Texas

Good Results With Prayer and the Word

In the *From Faith to Faith* devotion for March 15, Kenneth Copeland talked about a weight problem he had and how he prayed, then lost the weight. I had a problem losing and keeping weight off, and had gotten up to 220 pounds. I thought if God did it for Kenneth Copeland He'd do it for me. So I prayed the same prayer, and in nearly two years I have lost 46 pounds, and am losing about a pound per week. Because I'm tall I never really looked fat, but never felt comfortable with the extra weight. I'm now at the top of my ideal weight for my height of 5 feet 11 inches—a weight I haven't seen for many years. Because I'm in my 60s, I had been told it would be harder to lose weight than when I was younger, but

with God's help it is easy. I'm now eating sensibly, have cut down on sugar and salt, and am taking exercise. I have more energy now than I've had in years and I'm able to do more. Thank You, Lord Jesus.

I've also had food allergies in recent years, the main one being to bread/wheat. I could eat organic bread/wheat but not what was normally sold in the shops. Over the months I quoted Exodus 23:25 making it personal: "So I shall serve the Lord my God and He will bless my bread and my water. And He will take sickness away from me."

Last September, Jesus asked me to trust Him and eat ordinary bread, so I stepped out in faith and can now eat normal bread and some wheat products. Praise God!

L.G. | United Kingdom

My Heart Is Healed!

Thank you for the prayer I received from your prayer minister. Tests show that my heart is completely healed. Thank You, Jesus!

L.C. | South Africa



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Jeremy Brought Me Faith and Hope

As I listened to Jeremy Pearsons on the broadcast, he brought faith and hope to my heart, and calmed my nerves. Thank you for being there when I needed you. I love you all.

R.N. | New York

salvation prayer

If you do not know Jesus as your Savior and Lord, simply pray the following prayer in faith, and Jesus will be your Lord!

Heavenly Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. Your Word says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" and "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:9). You said my salvation would be the result of Your Holy Spirit giving me new birth by coming to live in me (John 3:5-6, 15-16; Romans 8:9-11) and that if I would ask, You would fill me with Your Spirit and give me the ability to speak with other tongues (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:4).

I take You at Your Word. I confess that Jesus is Lord. And I believe in my heart that You raised Him from the dead. Thank You for coming into my heart, for giving me Your Holy Spirit as You have promised, and for being Lord over my life. Amen.

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If you have just prayed this prayer, please let us know of your decision. We have a **Free Gift** to help you begin your new life in Jesus!

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There is nothing like the Word that is received from God in these meetings—

this is truly a special place!

—Jennifer A., Texas

Southwest Believers' Convention June 30-July 5

Fort Worth Convention Center | 1201 Houston St. | Fort Worth, TX 76102
Spanish translation and sign-language interpretation available at this event

Orlando April 18-19

Living Victory Faith Encounter : Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate
1500 Masters Blvd. | ChampionsGate, FL 33896

Las Vegas May 30-31

Living Victory Faith Encounter : The M Resort
12300 Las Vegas Blvd. S. | Henderson, NV 89044

Peru June 6-7

Victory Campaign : No preregistration for this event
Coliseo Eduardo Dibós | Entre la Intersección Angamos y la Avenida Aviación
Distrito de San Borja | Lima, Peru

Venezuela Sept. 5-6

Victory Campaign : No preregistration for this event
Sports Center 'Pedro Elías Belisario Aponte,' Ave. 25 con Prolongación
Circunvalación 2, con Ave. 5 de Julio, Maracaibo, Estado de Zulia, Venezuela

New York City Sept. 12-13

Living Victory Faith Encounter : New York Marriott Marquis
1535 Broadway | New York, NY 10036

Word Explosion Sept. 25-27

Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center
1101 Lincoln St. | Columbia, SC 29201

Washington, D.C. Nov. 13-15

Victory Campaign : Spanish translation and sign-language interpretation available at this event
Hylton Memorial Chapel | 14640 Potomac Mills Road | Woodbridge, VA 22192

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7700 S. Lewis Ave. | Tulsa, OK 74136
1-918-491-7700 | victory.com

Annual Convention: June 13-14
Word of Faith International Christian Center
20000 W. Nine Mile Road | Southfield, MI 48075
1-248-353-3476 | woficc.com

Devoted—International Women's Conference: June 24-29
Word of Life Christian Center
550 Queen St. | Honolulu, HI 96813
1-808-528-4044 | wolhawaii.com
(Registration fee required, see website or call for details.)

Holy Spirit Conference: July 29
International Church of Las Vegas
8100 Westcliff Drive | Las Vegas, NV 89145
1-702-242-2273 | iclv.com

2014 International Faith Conference: Sept. 8
Living Word Christian Center
7306 W. Madison St. | Forest Park, IL 60130
1-708-697-5100
billwinston.org or livingwd.org

Join Dr. Stephen and/or Kellie Swisher at:

Walk on the Water Faith Church: March 16
959 Nichols Road | Osage Beach, MO 65065
1-573-348-9777 | faithman.org

Europe Partner Meeting and Pastors Conference: May 17-18
Jubilee Church
Bouwlingstraat 74 | 4902 AK Oosterhout (NB)
The Netherlands | Jubilee.nl

Blessing by Faith Church: May 20
Colmanstraat 12 | 9290 Berlare | Belgium
blessingbyfaith.com

Greater Harvest Church of God in Christ: June 7-8
1144 Olive Ave. | Long Beach, CA 90813
1-562-437-9128 | thegreaterharvest.org

Dunamis Power Ministries: June 8
2000 W. Olympic Blvd.
Montebello, CA 90640 | 1-562-965-3007

Join Terri Copeland Pearsons at:

European Prayer Conference: March 21-23
The Park Hotel | 6 Avenue de Suède, 06000
Nice, France | +33-658-736-284
elbnfrance.com

Glorious 2014 Women's Conference: Oct. 10-11
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Your words either turn your angels loose to work for you or force them to sit helplessly by while the devil harasses you.



SET YOUR Angels Free

by Gloria Copeland



I don't think it's any exaggeration to say that every one of us is facing some kind of problem today. Some kind of trouble we can't escape without the help of God. For one person, that trouble may be a disease that medical science can't cure. For another, it may be financial problems or a family crisis. ∴ But no matter what kind of wall the devil has backed you up against, you can count on one thing: God has promised to deliver you. That's right. The Word says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19). How I love the word *all* in the Bible!

.....

How does God carry out that deliverance? One way He does it is through angels. You may not have given angels much thought, but you should! In the dangerous days in which we live, their activities are crucial to your safety. And you need to understand how they operate.

Psalm 91:9-11 tells us that, "Because you have made the Lord your refuge, and the Most High your dwelling place, there shall no evil befall you, nor any plague or calamity come near your tent. For He will give His angels [especial] charge over you to accompany and defend and preserve you in all your ways [of obedience and service]" (*The Amplified Bible*).

God gives His angels

charge over you. He charges them to protect you...to keep you...to minister to you.

As Hebrews 1:14 says, "Are not the angels all ministering spirits (servants) sent out in the service [of God for the assistance] of those who are to inherit salvation?" (*AMP*). If you are an heir of salvation, angels are sent out in service to you. And their ministry can literally be a lifesaver.

It certainly was for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The Bible tells us they were hauled before the king because they refused to bow down before his golden image—and they were sentenced to die in a fiery furnace.

When the king warned them of the deadly consequences of their actions, Shadrach,

Meshach and Abednego said: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Daniel 3:16-18).

I've noticed something about every instance where angels supernaturally delivered God's people. They were faithful people. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said, "Even if it costs us our lives, we will not bow down." The king was so enraged he ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than normal.

When you speak out God's Word of deliverance, the angels assigned to you *go to work* to bring that Word to pass.

The fire was so hot it killed the soldiers who threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into it.

But the Bible says, "And to God the Lord belongs escape from death [setting us free]" (Psalm 68:20, AMP). God provided that escape for these three faithful servants.

When Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace, he jumped up and asked his counselors:

Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt! And the form of the fourth is like a son of the gods! Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the Most High God, [Nebuchadnezzar started speaking respectfully all of a sudden] come out and come here. [They] came out from the midst of the fire. And

the satraps, the deputies, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered around together and saw these men—*that the fire had no power upon their bodies, nor was the hair of their head singed; neither were their garments scorched or changed in color or condition, nor had even the smell of smoke clung to them* (Daniel 3:24-27, AMP).

I'm telling you, these three men didn't just escape the furnace alive; they came out without a hair on their head singed. They didn't even smell like smoke.

When Nebuchadnezzar saw what had happened, he said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *who hath sent his angel*, and delivered his servants that trusted in him" (verse 28). Even Nebuchadnezzar realized that because these men had trusted God, He had sent an angel to protect them.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's experience wasn't an isolated incident either.

God did the same for Daniel. You probably remember the story. The king had been trapped by wicked men into sentencing Daniel to death. Daniel's only crime was prayer, and the night he was thrown into the lions' den, the king was grieved.

Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me (Daniel 6:18-22).

Some Bibles include a picture illustrating that story. It shows Daniel asleep and the lions asleep at his feet. I like that! It reminds me that Daniel slept better in the lions' den than the king did at the palace. Daniel was at peace because an angel of God protected him.

The prophet Elisha experienced the same kind of protection. Second Kings 6 tells of a time when he and his servant were surrounded by the Syrian army. His servant panicked. "Alas, my master! how shall we do?"

Elisha looked out at the

horses and chariots of that great, hostile army and said, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them" (verse 16). He didn't pray, "Lord, help us! Protect us! Keep us!" He was so steadfast in God's deliverance and protection that he simply said, "I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (verse 17).

Elisha could see in the spirit. He saw not only the enemy army, but horses and chariots of fire and angels encompassed about him. There were more angels than there were natural soldiers. Those angels were ready to bring the deliverance Elisha needed.

Peter Delivered From Prison

We can see angels at work in the New Testament too. In Acts 12, for example, we see Peter in prison. James had been killed and Herod was planning to kill Peter the next day. "And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands" (verse 7).

Notice that Peter was a man of faith. If you thought they were going to cut your head off the next morning, I doubt you would be sleeping so soundly that an angel would have to hit you to wake you up.

The angel told Peter to get his shoes on and follow him. "When they were past the

first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord” (verse 10).

When you're dealing with angels, natural hindrances are nothing. The chains just fell off Peter. When they reached the outer gate, it opened of its own accord. After the angel left him, Peter hurried to a prayer meeting and the believers there were so shocked to see him, they failed to open the gate and let him in. It was easier for Peter to get out of prison than to get into the prayer meeting!

Another thing about angels is they have supernatural, superhuman strength. The Word says they “excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word” (Psalm 103:20).

That last phrase gives you a clue about what causes the angels to work. They hearken to the voice of God's Word. And they hear the voice of His Word concerning your welfare from your mouth. When you speak out God's Word of deliverance, the angels assigned to you go to work to bring that Word to pass.

The Bible gives us clear instructions about how to deal with angels. It says: “Provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice [the angel's voice], and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For mine Angel shall go before thee” (Exodus 23:21-23).

Provoke him not. How

do you provoke your angel? By speaking things that are contrary to the Word of God. By saying things like, “They're going to kill me...I'm afraid...I'm sick....”

When you speak your defeat instead of your victory, the angels assigned to you don't have the right to say, “That poor, dumb man, I'll just bless him anyway. I'll protect him even though he's not trusting God.” No, they can't do that. Their hands are tied by your words of unbelief. They are bound. *They have been charged to hearken to God's Word—words of faith* (Psalm 103:20).

Your words either turn your angels loose to work for you or force them to sit helplessly by while the devil harasses you.

If you haven't been getting the action you want in your finances, your health or any other area, the first place to look is right in your own mouth. Don't blame it on your wife. Don't blame your husband or your pastor. Look at your own words. There is no shortage of angel power. There are plenty of them. Trillions. If there's a shortage in your life at all, it's a shortage of Word power.

Solve that shortage by putting God's promises of deliverance in your heart and in your mouth. Continually give the angels the Word they need to protect you. When you're tempted to discuss how bad your situation is—stop. Remember your great salvation. Remember the angels. Remember what God's Word says about your situation. Open your mouth. ❶

I've been standing for my healing for a long time, but it has not come. Is God withholding my healing from me or could something else be blocking it?

God never holds out on us. His will is that all men be healed—and that includes you! Jesus purchased your healing at the same time He purchased your redemption from sin (Isaiah 53:4-5). So health is just as available to you as salvation is.

When we fail to receive something He's promised, we can always be assured that the problem lies with us and not with Him. There are, however, several things that might be preventing you from receiving it.

1. Failing to walk in love

Galatians 5:6 says faith works by love. So if you want your faith to prevail over sickness or disease, you have to operate in love. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and find out how God's kind of love behaves. After all, love is not a feeling. It's an action. So start acting in love and your healing won't be far behind.

2. Unbelief

In Mark 11:24, Jesus tells us what is required for us to receive from God. He said, “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

Most people are only willing to believe they've received healing after they can *see* or *feel* the results. But according to that scripture, you must believe you receive it *when you pray*. When you believe by faith that you have what you ask for, healing will come.

3. Sin

First John 3:22 says we receive whatever we ask of God because we do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Living a life free from habitual sin and rebellion causes us to have confidence in our heart toward God. And confidence toward God is an essential part of the operation of faith.

4. Unforgiveness

This is perhaps the greatest hindrance to healing. That's why immediately after giving instructions about faith, Jesus said, “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses” (Mark 11:25-26).

Notice the words *when ye stand praying*. Don't wait. As soon as someone offends you, forgive immediately and your prayers will never be hindered.

If you are obeying in these four areas consistently, then you can be confident that your healing will come. So just keep standing in faith (Ephesians 6:12-13) and you will receive! ❷

Jesus' Final Words

On the night when Jesus was betrayed, He got on His knees and washed His disciples' feet. Then He served the disciples their first Communion as He confirmed His covenant with them.

Afterward, Jesus began to speak the last words He would ever speak to them in His human form, before He received a glorified body. As Jesus looked into the eyes of His disciples, He knew this was the last time He'd speak to them in this capacity. He also knew that these last words would be among the most important words He had *ever* spoken to them.

So what did Jesus say to His disciples in those final, intimate moments with them?

Think about what you would talk about if you knew you were looking into the eyes of your family members and friends for the last time. I seriously doubt you'd joke or make a lot of small talk.

Such moments are hallowed and sacred. It would be a time for you to carefully weigh your words and to speak what you believe is most important for your listeners to remember after you are gone.

If you had the opportunity to speak your last words to those you love, wouldn't you carefully choose the words you spoke in that final moment?

Wouldn't it be a time to say the things that were most important and dear to your heart—words that communicated the deepest feelings of your soul to your loved ones?

If you are like the majority of other human beings, it would be your greatest desire in that final moment to make your last words the most thoughtful,

Jesus wanted the disciples to know that the Holy Spirit was just like Him.

advantageous, and heartfelt words you could leave with the people who mean the most to you.

In every person's life, there are key moments when he or she is faced with the need to speak *concluding words*.

Before a person slips into eternity, he often prays for an opportunity to speak final words of farewell to his loved ones.

A person may need to speak final words at his workplace because of a job change that requires him to relocate and thereby leave behind associates and friends with whom he has worked for a long time.

Parents come to that moment when they must carefully speak their last words to their son or daughter right before their child stands before a minister and commits his or her life to someone else in marriage.

There are many different reasons you might need to speak *last words* at various times in your life. Can you think of a time in particular when you had to choose final words to speak to people whom you deeply loved?

I remember such a



moment in my life. After serving one church for many years and literally pouring our hearts and souls into that congregation, Denise and I sensed that it was time for us to follow God's call elsewhere. The days passed and the time drew nearer to our last church service with our congregation. More and more I became aware that when I stood before the people as senior pastor for the last time, I'd be preaching the most important message I'd ever preached to that church.

In the years we had served in this church, the congregation had heard many of my sermons. But in that last service, I'd be speaking my *last words* to them as their senior pastor. Therefore, I knew my words had to be carefully chosen and sensitively spoken. It was essential that I leave them with the message that was most important for them to hear from me as I stood before them for the last time in the role of their senior pastor.

After Jesus washed His disciples' feet and served them their first Communion, He stayed with them and taught them for a lengthy period of time. We don't know exactly how long Jesus' teaching lasted that night, but three entire chapters (John 14, 15 and 16) are devoted to His last words to His disciples. These chapters contain the Spirit-inspired record of what Jesus said to His disciples just hours before He went to the Cross and the grave. This would be the last time He'd ever speak to them as the

Leader they had known in human form.

Jesus was about to physically depart from this world. He knew it was absolutely essential that the disciples learn how to rely entirely on the Spirit of God for guidance and direction after He left. Therefore, Jesus used His last moments to teach the disciples how to follow the Holy Spirit's leadership in the same way they had followed Him.

It must have seemed strange to the disciples as they listened to Jesus speak about the Holy Spirit. They had been accustomed to Jesus physically and visibly leading them, but now they were learning that the Spirit of God would become their Leader. This would be a Leader they couldn't see, couldn't touch, and couldn't audibly hear; yet they were supposed to follow Him just as they had followed Jesus. They were probably thinking, *What is the Holy Spirit's leadership going to be like in our lives? Does He act and think differently than Jesus? What is it going to be like to follow the Spirit of God?*

Knowing that these were normal questions to ask, Jesus used His final moments with the disciples to dispel all fear and insecurity they might have felt about following the Holy Spirit's leadership. This is why Jesus was so careful to use key words when He spoke to them about the coming of the Holy Spirit. In John 14:16, for example, Jesus said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter..."

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The word *allos* emphatically means that the Holy Spirit would be like Jesus in every way.

attention to a very important word in this verse—the word “another.” In Greek, there are two possible words for “another.” The first is the Greek word *allos*, and the second is the Greek word *heteros*. The word *allos* means “one of the very same kind; same character; same everything;” or “nearly a duplicate.” The second word, *heteros*, means “one of another kind” or “one of a different kind.” This word *heteros* forms the first part of the word heterosexual, which, of course, describes someone who has sexual relations with a person of the opposite sex.

The Greek word used in John 14:16 is the first word, *allos*. The word *allos* emphatically means that the Holy Spirit would be like Jesus in every way. This conveys a very strong and important message about the Holy Spirit. Jesus wanted the disciples to know that the Holy Spirit was just like Him. Following the Holy Spirit wouldn't be any different than following Him, except the Spirit's leadership would be invisible rather than physical and visible, as Jesus' leadership had been.

John 14:16 could thus be translated to mean: “I will pray the Father and He will send you Someone who is just like Me in every way. He will be identical to Me in the way He speaks, the way He thinks, the way He operates, the way He sees things, and the way He does things. He will be exactly like Me in every way. If the Holy Spirit is here, it will be just as if I am here because We think, behave, and operate exactly the same.”

Earlier in John 14, Philip told the Lord, “...Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us” (John 14:8). Jesus answered, “...Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?” (John 14:9).

Jesus was the exact image of the Father when He walked on this earth. Hebrews 1:3 (*The Amplified Bible*) declares, “He is the sole expression of the glory of God [the Light-being, the out-raying or radiance of the divine], and He is the perfect imprint and very image of [God's] nature....” This means Jesus reflected the character of His Heavenly Father in every way. That is why Jesus told Philip, “...He that hath seen me hath seen the Father....”

Although the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each distinct Members of the Godhead, there is only one God, and each Person of the Godhead shares the same substance and essence. So if you see Jesus, you see the Father. By looking at Jesus, you can discover the Father's will. Jesus did and said exactly what the Father would do and say. His life, attitudes, and actions were the absolute manifested will of the Father, for the two were united in nature, in character, in thought, and in deed.

As Jesus teaches the disciples about the Holy Spirit, He takes this truth one step further. Just as Jesus is the exact image of the Father in every way, now Jesus unmistakably tells the disciples that when the Holy Spirit comes, He will exactly represent Jesus in every word. That's why the word *allos* is used to make this point. It leaves no room for doubt that the Holy Spirit will be exactly like Jesus.

The word *allos* tells us the Holy Spirit perfectly represents the life and nature of Jesus Christ. Jesus did only what the Heavenly Father would do, and now the Holy Spirit will do only what Jesus would do. As Jesus' Representative on earth, the Holy Spirit never acts on His own or out of

character with the life of Jesus Christ.

You see, the Spirit of God was sent to bring us the life of Jesus. Just as Jesus told Philip, “If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father,” now He is telling us, “If you have the Holy Spirit, it will be just as if you have Me.”

I've often heard Christians ask, “I wonder what it must have been like to walk with Jesus. Wouldn't it be wonderful to walk with Him and to hear His voice and talk to Him?” But believers who ask these kinds of questions don't understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit. If they did, they'd know that having the Holy Spirit with them is just like having Jesus right at their side!

You and I must stop looking backward and grieving over what we missed by not living 2,000 years ago. Instead, we must learn to let the Holy Spirit lead and guide us, just as He did in the Early Church. Jesus' physical absence didn't stop the early believers from performing miracles, raising the dead, casting out demons, healing the sick, or bringing multitudes to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Because the Holy Spirit was with them, the ministry of Jesus continued uninterrupted in their midst.

Never forget—as a child of God, you have the Holy Spirit working within you and alongside you every moment of every day. And because the Holy Spirit is the exact representation of your Lord and Savior, it's just like having Jesus right there at your side.

Jesus' last words to His disciples revolved around the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. That's how serious this message was to Jesus! Since Jesus considered this subject to be so important, why don't you open your heart to the work of the Spirit today? Let the Holy Spirit represent Jesus to you, your church, your family, your business, and your city, just as He did to believers who lived during the time of the book of Acts. ⑦



Rick Renner is a respected Bible teacher and leader in the international Christian community. The author of more than 30 books, his best-sellers include *Dressed to Kill* and *Sparkling Gems From the Greek*. In 1991, Rick and his wife, Denise, moved to the former Soviet Union with their three sons, establishing churches, a Bible seminary, a pastoral association and the first Christian television network in the former USSR.



by Gloria Copeland

The PROSPEROUS SOUL



What does it take to be truly prosperous?

That's a question you, as a believer, should be able to answer. Assuming, of course, that you like to prosper. If prosperity doesn't appeal to you, there's no need for you to bother with it. But if it does, if you want to enjoy all the divine riches that are yours in Christ Jesus, you need to know what it takes to receive them.

Personally, I'm very interested in that.

I find it's much better to be prosperous and blessed than to be in lack, in debt and under the curse. So, ever since I got born again I've been studying what the Bible says about prosperity. Although I've learned a lot and am



still learning, in my 40-plus years of researching the subject I've identified one verse of Scripture that pretty well sums up everything I've discovered. It's in 3 John 1:2: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

Right there, in that one single scripture, is the answer to the question, *What does it take to be prosperous?*

It takes a prosperous soul.

"But Gloria," you might say, "doesn't every Christian have a prosperous soul? Isn't that just an automatic byproduct of our being saved?"

No, it's not.

When we were saved, or "born again" as Jesus called it, the part of us that was prospered was our spirit. It was instantly re-created in the image of God and made totally new. But our soul, which is made up of our mind,

will and emotions, remained relatively unchanged.

Most of us realized this within days, if not hours, after we were saved. Much to our dismay we found that, despite the rebirth of our spirit, we were still thinking the same old worldly thoughts, making the same old decisions and feeling the same old emotions we always did.

As baffling as this seemed, the reason for it is simple: Unlike the new birth, the transformation of the soul doesn't happen instantaneously. It's a process that takes place over time as our minds are renewed by revelation from the Word of God.

Sadly, many Christians never commit themselves to this process. They get saved and become part of God's family, but because they don't spend time in His Word, they never learn how to walk with Him. As a

result, their souls never prosper and they never enjoy all the benefits of THE BLESSING that belong to them as believers.

It's no wonder the Apostle John said, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (3 John 1:4). Walking in the truth of the Word is what causes our souls to prosper. And soul prosperity is the foundation of the prosperous life!

This is why I preach so much about spending time in God's Word. It's the primary key to our success as believers. We can't prosper in God without knowing what He says and doing it.

I can guess what you might be thinking: *What about all the ungodly rich people in the world? They made their millions while totally ignoring everything the Bible says!*

Yes, that's true. But you have to remember, the kind of prosperity those

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people have doesn't come from God so it is limited. It may provide them with plenty of money, but in the end it will leave them miserable.

Divine prosperity, on the other hand, is limitless! It includes everything good. It not only increases you financially, it brings you peace, joy, health and long life. God's kind of prosperity blesses you in every area and leaves you with nothing missing and nothing broken.

When you prosper in God as your soul prospers, you have an absolutely lovely life!

Rich Relatives and Lottery Tickets Not Required

Another wonderful thing about God's kind of prosperity is this: Anyone can have it!

You don't need to have rich relatives. You don't need to be a financial genius or possess some great natural talent. You don't have to win the lottery. You just have to open your Bible, read it, believe it and act on it. You just have to find out from God's Word what the truth is and then walk in that truth.

"But I don't know anything about the Bible!" someone might say. That's OK. I didn't either when I first was born again. As a child, I rarely attended church and my parents didn't know enough about God to teach me anything. Although I did see Oral Roberts on TV at my grandmother's house, she told me that when he prayed for the sick he paid people to say they were healed. I was just a little girl, so I believed it. *I wonder what he pays them, I thought, \$5 maybe?*

That's the kind of spiritual enlightenment we had at our house!

But I'm living proof that just because you start out ignorant of the Bible doesn't mean you have to stay that way. After I married Ken and his mother's prayers went to work on me, I started to change. I not only got born again, I was also filled with the Holy Spirit.

That was a major milestone in my life. I never really grew very much in the Lord until after I received the Holy Spirit. Neither does any other believer. Why? Because the Holy Spirit is the teacher of the Church. He's the One sent by God to train and correct us. He's the One who enlightens us and reveals to us God's truth. He is our Teacher.

Normally, however, He doesn't do it while we're sleeping or watching sitcoms on television. He does it when we're seeking God through His Word. As we read the Bible, the Holy Spirit causes the words on the pages to jump up and speak to us. He makes them come alive to us so that we say, "Oh, I see that! I see how I need to change my behavior. I see how I need to change what I believe and what I say so that I'm walking in line with God's Word!"

That's what happened to me. After I was filled with the Holy Spirit, I started growing in my knowledge of the truth just by reading and studying my Bible by myself at home. Then, a year or two later, Ken and I started

Don't Shoot!



In Psalm 64:3, David compared words to arrows. The wicked, he said, "sharpen their tongues like swords and aim cruel words like deadly arrows" (*New International Version*).

I was reminded of this comparison some years ago when I was given a compound bow and a set of razor-tipped arrows. Because of its power and the sharpness of the arrows, this bow is a lethal weapon. Consequently, I have to be careful how I use it.

As long as I have the bowstring in my hand, I'm in control of the arrow. But the moment I release the string, it's no longer in my control. The arrow will simply go where it was pointed. I cannot get it back or slow it down. Once I've loosed it, it's on its way to a target.

And that's exactly how words are. As long as words are in your mind and in your heart, as long as you haven't spoken them, you've got your hand on the bowstring. You're still in control. You can let the bow back down and not shoot at all. But if you let go of the string—speak the words—the arrow flies. There's no way you can recall words once they're spoken.

And if your words are "deadly arrows," they may do unintended harm.

Suppose I carry my bow to work some morning when I'm

angry and just start shooting arrows in every direction. What happens? When

I cool off and look, I see people lying all around with arrows sticking out of them.

Of course, I can run over to the nearest victim and apologize. "Oh, man, I'm sorry. I was upset about something. I didn't mean to shoot you. I wasn't even thinking about you. I wasn't aiming for you. I was just shooting. I'm sorry!"

But the trouble is—you're still shot! I can pull the arrow out and pour oil and wine on the wound, but no matter how much I apologize, I can't unsay the words that wounded you. You're still shot, and I have some idle words to give account of to God (Matthew 12:36).

We can avoid disasters like this by following the principles in God's Word. Proverbs 15:28 says, "The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things." And James 1:19 tells us to be "slow to speak."

So, the next time you're tempted to "shoot off your mouth," stop and consider whether your words may become "deadly arrows." Study the effect of your words before you speak, and then you won't have to apologize for them later. ♣

About

Keith Moore is founder and president of Moore Life Ministries and pastor of Faith Life Church in both Branson, Mo. and Sarasota, Fla. For more information or ministry materials write to Moore Life Ministries, P.O. Box 1010, Branson, MO 65615; call 1-417-334-9233; or visit moorelife.org.

“If you daily abide in the Lord, your heart will be strong and *full of the spiritual energy* you need to overrule the flesh and let love flow.”



listening to ministers like Kenneth E. Hagin and Oral Roberts. As we went to their meetings and listened to their messages over and over on our big reel-to-reel tape recorder (there weren't any CDs or MP3s back then) my progress sped up. My soul prosperity increased at a quicker pace.

That's the way God designed things to work. It's the reason "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Ephesians 4:11). God never intended for every generation of believers to start over at zero and learn

everything from scratch. He meant for us to benefit from the revelation of previous generations so that we could grow faster and continue to learn.

Oh, what a blessing it is in our day that we can hear good Word-based preaching not only in church every week, but daily on TV and the Internet! How wonderful that we can attend meetings like the Southwest Believers' Convention, where we can soak in the Word for six solid days!

I'm always amazed at how much my soul can prosper during just one week at a Believers' Convention. If you

haven't ever been to one, you ought to try it. It can change your whole life.

Granted, your friends might think you're strange for spending your valuable vacation time listening to a bunch of preachers. They might even say you're some kind of nut. But who cares what they say? That kind of vacation will accelerate your prosperity! It will give you a mega-opportunity to "receive and welcome the Word which implanted and rooted [in your hearts] contains the power to save your souls" (James 1:21, *The Amplified Bible*).

If taking advantage of that opportunity qualifies you as a nut in the eyes of the world, so be it. You'll be a prosperous, joyful nut with an absolutely lovely life!

Keep On Keeping On

"But Gloria," you might say, "I've already done all the things you're suggesting. I've read the Bible. I've gone to a Believers' Convention. I've believed and acted on the Word I heard there, but I haven't yet seen all the results I want to see."

Then persevere. Keep on keeping on and remember what James 1:25 says. The person who looks carefully into the Word, "and is faithful to it, and *perseveres* in looking into it, being not a heedless listener who forgets but an active doer [who obeys], he shall be blessed in his doing (his life of obedience)" (*AMP*, emphasis mine).

It takes perseverance to have a prosperous soul!

Why is that? Because although the Word always works when it's put to work, the results can't always be seen overnight. As Jesus said in Mark 4, the Word is like a seed. It grows up gradually and takes time to produce a harvest.

What's more, most of us spent years before we got saved, thinking and doing the opposite of what God says. So, especially when we first get started



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in the things of God, it takes some time to get our thinking turned around.

Ken and I found this out when we first began to hear the truth of God's Word about prosperity in 1967. We were in desperate financial shape back then. We had a mountain of debt, very little income and a family to feed. So, as you can imagine, we wanted to see God's BLESSING manifested in our finances and we wanted to see it fast!

But even though we were diligent about reading the Word, meditating on it and confessing it, it took a while for us to renew our minds and start thinking more like God does about prosperity. It took time for us to get His Word about that area of our lives inside us in abundance.

Our bills didn't get paid off in the first few weeks or even the first few months. But we stuck with the Word anyway. We kept it in front of our eyes and in our ears until it started coming out of our mouths. We attended to it until it was more real to us than the circumstances around us, until it was so alive in us that it was speaking to us day and night. As we did, our souls began to prosper.

Almost a year later, we were out of debt.

Did we want to wait a year to see that result? Of course not! But, thank God, we persevered anyway. We kept looking into God's Word and learning what He says—not only about prosperity but about healing and everything else.

We're still persevering and learning today. We're still endeavoring to be active doers of the Word. As a result, our souls keep prospering and we continue to be blessed.

Money From Home

The same can be true for you. After all, God wants to bless you just as much as He wants to bless Ken and me.

"Are you sure?" you might ask.

Yes, I am! The Bible leaves no doubt about it. It says clearly in black and white that God wants all of His children to prosper and be in health. It says He actually takes pleasure in

prospering His people (Psalm 35:27).

BLESSING and increasing you is one of God's favorite things to do!

But for Him to do it, you must cooperate with Him. You must dig into His Word and do what He said in Proverbs 2:1-9:

My child, listen to what I say, and treasure my commands. Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding. Cry out for insight, and ask for understanding. Search for them as you would for silver; seek them like hidden treasures. Then you will understand what it means to fear the Lord, and you will gain knowledge of God. For the Lord grants wisdom! From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity. He guards the paths of the just and protects those who are faithful to him. Then you will understand what is right, just, and fair, and you will find the right way to go (*New Living Translation*).

To people who haven't been born again, the idea of seeking God's wisdom by spending time reading and studying the Bible every day might sound boring. But to those of us who are believers, the Bible is never boring. It's always saying good things about our lives. It's perpetually talking to us about how God will heal us, prosper us and give us every good thing. It's constantly providing us with the wisdom we need to live an abundant life.

As God's children, we never tire of reading God's Word because to us it's like getting money from home every time we open it up! It's blessing, blessing, blessing!

So, stir yourself up about it. Make a fresh commitment to keep the Word in front of your eyes and in your ears. Spend time in it every day, not as a religious ritual but because you know that the more you renew your mind with the Word, the more you'll be able to walk in the truth. The more you'll be able to prosper even as your soul prospers, in every area of life. 📖

points to get you there



a prosperous soul

What does it take to be truly prosperous? It takes a prosperous soul! How do you get a prosperous soul? By renewing your mind with the Word of God and walking in His truth. Here are a few points to help you:

- 1 Set aside time daily to seek God through His Word.**
Proverbs 2:1-2: "My child, listen to what I say, and treasure my commands. Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding."
(*New Living Translation*)
- 2 Let the Holy Spirit make that Word alive to you and teach you what you need to know.**
John 16:13: "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth."
(*NLT*)
- 3 Speed up your spiritual growth by listening often to Word-based teachers and preachers.**
Ephesians 4:11-12: "These are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work...." (*NLT*)
- 4 Commit yourself to the process of renewing your mind.**
Romans 12:2: "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think."
(*NLT*)
- 5 Even if it takes time to see results, persevere in the Word.**
James 1:25: "He who looks carefully into the faultless law, the [law] of liberty, and is faithful to it and perseveres in looking into it, being not a heedless listener who forgets but an active doer [who obeys], he shall be blessed in his doing (his life of obedience)."
(*The Amplified Bible*)



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**Psalm 91: God's Long-Life
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Sun., April 13

**Psalm 91: God's Plan for
Your Protection**
Gloria Copeland

April 14-18

It Is Finished!
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Sun., April 20

Rescued From Darkness to Light
Kenneth Copeland

April 21-25

The Glory of God's Presence
Gloria Copeland and Billye Brim

Sun., April 27

Fearless in the Secret Place
Kenneth Copeland

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