

Ten Reasons NOT To Reject Word-of-Faith Teachings
A Response to the tract written by Tricia Tillin Titled “Ten Reasons To Reject
Word-of-Faith Teachings”

Reason 9: It Agrees With God’s Word That Has Power to Change
Circumstances That Contradict It.

In her 9th reason for rejecting the Faith Movement, Tillin claims that its proponents deny the reality of sickness and sin. It seems to me that Tillin would have accused the great reformer, Martin Luther, of this exact same thing 400 years ago:

By faith alone can we become righteous, for faith invests us with the sinlessness of Christ. The more fully we believe this, the fuller will be our joy. **If you believe that sin, death, and the curse are void, why, they are null, zero. Whenever sin and death make you nervous write it down as an illusion of the devil. There is no sin now, no curse, no death, no devil because Christ has done away with them.** This fact is sure. There is nothing wrong with the fact. The defect lies in our lack of faith.¹

By today’s standards of heresy, Luther, who lived hundreds of years before New Thought, Christian Science, or the New Age Movement, could have been accused of *literally* denying the *existence* of sin, the curse, death and the devil. Nonetheless, Luther was relating a principle that says, “*we walk by faith and not by sight*” (2 Cor. 5:7).

This understanding of faith’s operations comes from numerous passages of Scripture. The first thing about faith is that it *believes before it sees the desired result* or the thing that it wants:

Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? (John 11:40)

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. (John 20:29)

Jesus demands a faith that believes before it sees the reality of the thing promised. If we desire to see God’s glory or receive His blessing, we are required to believe first and then we will see these things. Furthermore, *faith takes possession of the thing it desires from God* before it actually has it in visible form. Again, we could quote many scriptures to this effect. Concerning the Israelites, God said, “*Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses*” (Josh. 1:3).

God had declared that the land already belonged to Israel. He said that He had given it to them. Their part was to take possession of that which was given. God’s Word was the warranty deed to the Canaanite land, and their faith with its corresponding actions was necessary to possess what already belonged to them.

The faith teachers (and many before them) understand the principle of taking possession of God’s promises by faith. They believe that God’s Word and their faith in it

¹ Luther, Martin **Commentary on Galatians**, Comments on Galatians 3:13

is sufficient to declare ownership of what has been promised. Their faith in God's Word is the guarantee that what God has promised is already theirs. Scripture supports this understanding. One of the foundational passages is Hebrews 11:1, which tells us that faith is the warranty deed of those things we expect from God:

Now faith is the title deed of things hoped for, the proof of things which are not being seen (Heb. 11:1; The New Testament: An Expanded Translation by Kenneth S. Wuest)

Wuest's understanding of how Hebrews 11:1 is to be translated is supported by a number of scholars and commentators. Harold J. Berry, a Greek scholar, wrote,

In secular Greek of the New Testament times, hupostasis was used in the sense of "agreement of sale." Thus it conveyed the idea of evidence of ownership. It would be valid, therefore to translate Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the title deed of things hoped for." Faith is simply taking God at His word and acting accordingly. This kind of faith is the present title deed to what we will receive from God in the future.²

The late Baptist Evangelist, Oliver B. Greene also commented on the passages saying,

Faith is firm persuasion and expectation, knowing that God will perform all that He has promised to the believer in Christ and this persuasion is so strong and complete that it assures the believer of possession, even NOW, of those things for which we exercise faith. Faith gives the believer *substance in the soul* by the firstfruits and foretaste of things desired and requested of God in faith.³

Greene further wrote, "Faith enables the believer to worship God, and to thank and praise Him for future blessings as though he were already in full possession of those blessings."⁴ Further proof that faith in God's Word is the "warranty deed" for those things we desire is found in Mark 11:24. Quoting from Wuest's translation:

On this account I am saying to you, All things whatever you are praying and asking for, be believing that you received them, and they shall be yours.

In his "Word Studies," Wuest comments further on this passage:

"Receive" is aorist, thus antecedent in time to the verb "believe." Robertson says: "That is the test of faith, the kind that sees the fulfillment before it happens." "Faith is the title deed of things hoped for (Heb. 11:1)." Just as a title deed guarantees to the one whose name appears on it, the ownership of the property, even though he may not have it in his actual possession, so faith is the title deed that guarantees to the one exercising it, the

² Berry, Harold J. **Gems From The Original** (Lincoln, NE: Back To The Bible Broadcast, 1972), p. 104

³ Greene, Oliver B. **The Epistle of Paul The Apostle to the Hebrews** (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour, Inc., 1965), p. 437

⁴ Ibid.

answer to his prayer, even though that answer may be delayed, and the thing asked for is not in his possession.⁵

Well over a century ago, Andrew Murray commented on Mark 11:24 in his classic book on prayer:

‘Believe that ye have received.’ This is the word of central importance, of which the meaning is too often misunderstood. Believe that you have received! now, while praying, the thing you ask for. It may only be later that you shall have it in personal experience, that you shall see what you believe; but now, without seeing, you are to believe that it has been given you of the Father in heaven.⁶

One of Murray’s contemporaries, A. B. Simpson, wrote, “... the moment our petition passes the throne, we are justified in believing that we have exactly what we have asked for, and we can say, ‘I have received my answer, praise the Lord!’”⁷ It is scriptural to affirm the reality of God’s promises in spite of contradicting circumstances.

Nevertheless, The accusation that sin and sickness is denied is a false one. The faith teachers believe that healing of our bodies and victory over sin belong to us *now* (Matt. 8:16, 17; 1 Pet. 2:24; Rom. 6:11-18), and that we take possession of them by faith, but they do not deny the reality of these things. E. W. Kenyon, wrote the following

The fact cannot be denied that in this world there exists evil. The existence of evil has caused many earnest people to reject belief in a God of love; they have not understood that evil was the result of Satan’s reign over humanity as the prince and god of this world. There are philosophers who have been so impressed by the reign of evil that they have arrived at the conclusion that the central principle of the universe is evil. They are wrong. It is not the Creator, but the Usurper, Satan, who is the source of evil. The two divisions of evil are pain and sin. Pain may have several sub-divisions, but the major body of pain known and experienced by humanity is the pain caused by disease. In conclusion, sin and disease are twins, born of spiritual death. They are both the work of Satan. Sin is a disease of the spirit; sickness, as we see it, is a disease of the physical body.⁸

We can see that Kenyon did not deny the reality of sickness and sin, but acknowledged its existence. Other faith teachers have denied “denial:”

I do not deny the existence of the circumstances, but what I do is deny their right to rule my life. (Frederick K. C. Price)⁹

We do not deny pains and other symptoms, for they are very real. Instead, we look beyond them to God’s promises. (Kenneth E. Hagin Sr.)¹⁰

Don’t deny the facts, but allow God’s Word to transform and change those facts!
(Kenneth Hagin Jr.)¹¹

⁵ Wuest, Kenneth S. **Wuest’s Word Studies From the Greek New Testament: Volume One** (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), p. 225

⁶ Murray, Andrew **With Christ in the School of Prayer** (Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1981), p. 85

⁷ Simpson, Albert B. **The Life of Prayer** (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1989), p.67

⁸ Kenyon, Essek W. **The Bible in the Light of Our Redemption** (Lynnwood, WA: Kenyon’s Gospel Publishing Society, 1969), pp. 210, 211

⁹ Price, Frederick K. C. **The Way, The Walk, and The Warfare of the Believer** (Los Angeles, CA: Faith One Publishing, 1994), p. 331

¹⁰ Hagin Sr, Kenneth E. **New Thresholds of Faith** (Tulsa, OK: Rhema Bible Church, 1985), p. 8

I don't deny the existence of disease. I deny the right of that disease to exist in this body, because I'm the body of Christ. (Charles Capps)¹²

Denying the reality of our circumstances has no place in Word-Faith doctrine.

¹¹ Hagin Jr., Kenneth **Another Look at Faith** (Tulsa, OK: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1996), p. 31

¹² Capps, Charles **The Tongue - A Creative Force** (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House Publishers, 1976), p. 43.