

The Theological Structure of Word of Faith

By

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ABSTRACT

“The theological structure of Word of Faith” advances a constructive theology of Word of Faith as a system of six interconnected theological features (namely trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and the Jesus Died Spiritually doctrine – JDS) in order to add clarity, context and theological depth to analysis of the controversial Word of Faith movement.

To achieve the goals of clarification and critical analysis, my research adopts a two-part method. First, since many of the existing analyses of Word of Faith are to some extent reliant on the debated Kenyon-connection thesis that Word of Faith populariser Kenneth E. Hagin largely derived his theology from E. W. Kenyon and that Kenyon derived his theology from unorthodox sources, I re-read the theological context in which trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity developed in order to analyse the reception history of each theological feature and to provide the basis for the second part of each chapter. The second part of each chapter analyses the theological function of each feature in relation to the other features and asks whether or not these interrelated features function as a system.

My research unearths a number of under-acknowledged or overlooked sources of Word of Faith doctrine, something that significantly impacts critical evaluation of the movement’s theology. Ultimately, I conclude that Word of Faith theology does indeed operate as a system of six interconnected theological features.

My discovery of a broader theological source base than has previously been shown develops existing narratives relating to the development of the movement’s theology. At the same time, the discovery of additional sources re-contextualises Word of Faith within its own

Pentecostal and pre-Pentecostal setting. Deeper knowledge of the movement's theological genesis brings with it the opportunity for sharper critical insight relating to how each theological feature functions and how the movement's various beliefs operate in relation to one another.

As a result, this thesis provides a robust means by which the theology of contemporary Word of Faith movements can be identified, analysed and evaluated.

For Susan, Judah, Esther, Isaac and Zion - “Here am I and the children whom the LORD has given me! *We* are for signs and wonders..[in the earth]” (Isaiah 8:18)

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List of abbreviations

AG	Assemblies of God (USA)
AoG	Assemblies of God (UK)
JDS	Jesus Died Spiritually
PMU	Pentecostal Missions Union
RBTC	Rhema Bible Training Centre
KCM	Kenneth Copeland Ministries
WoF	Word of Faith

INTRODUCTION

Word of Faith (WoF) is a large, diverse and somewhat controversial branch of Pentecostalism. Large because it is a global phenomenon evident around the world.¹ Diverse because a variety of its expressions are found both inside and outside churches that self-identify as WoF.² And controversial because its beliefs and practices have been charged with ‘heresy’.³

Some of the earlier attempts at defining WoF in theological terms refer to the movement’s doctrine as ‘positive confession theology’,⁴ arguing that the term is an alternative for ‘faith-formula theology’ or ‘the prosperity doctrine promulgated by...televangelists under the...inspiration of Essek William Kenyon’.⁵ That definition also emphasises the importance of speech used as a creative force, making the so-called ‘rhema doctrine’ a core part of its explanation of the movement.⁶ In contrast, the entry by Richard Riss in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* on E. W. Kenyon refutes suggestions of significant theological connections between Kenyon and Gnosticism, stating ‘...the similarities between Kenyon’s theology and Gnostic system are only superficial’.⁷ And so, as soon as one attempts to introduce a standard definition of the movement, the need for a

¹ Luis Lugo, "Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals," (The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2006). Referring to the “health and wealth gospel” as a synonym for WoF teaching, the Pew Forum’s *Spirit and Power* report found that “belief in the prosperity gospel is quite common among Christians in each of the 10 countries [studied]”. Milmon F. Harrison, *Righteous Riches: The Word of Faith Movement in Contemporary African American Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 14-18. Harrison considers the growth and scope of various key WoF groupings up until the early part of the new millennium, especially relating to North America. William Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal of the Doctrine That Jesus Died Spiritually, as Taught by Kenyon, Hagin and Copeland," (University of Edinburgh, 2007), 12. William Atkinson gives examples of how this growth is also evident in the UK and Europe.

² Lugo, "Spirit and Power," 30.

³ Daniel R. McConnell, *The Promise of Health and Wealth* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990), xxii. Thomas Smail, Andrew Walker, and Nigel Wright, "Revelation Knowledge’ and Knowledge of Revelation: The Faith Movement and the Question of Heresy," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* (1994): 59. Both McConnell and Smail, Walker, Wright conclude that WoF is “heresy”.

⁴ L. Lovett, "Positive Confession Theology," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley Burgess, M. (Ed.) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 719.

⁷ Richard Riss, "Kenyon, Essek William," *ibid.*, ed. Stanley Burgess, M.

clearer definition of WoF and its theology becomes apparent. In short, the belief that God promises Christians material blessing and physical healing is amongst the most infamous aspects of contemporary Pentecostal worship. However, theological analysis of the relationships between the doctrines emanating from the Word of Faith movement – the stream most associated with those ideas – is less developed.

Classifying and Defining Word of Faith

The problem is primarily one of definition. Specifically, it is a question of defining WoF in terms of theological categories. Numerous evocative colloquial epithets have been applied to WoF. Many are used relatively interchangeably, such as ‘health and wealth’, ‘name it and claim it’ and ‘prosperity gospel’.⁸ While these succinctly identify examples of WoF teaching and praxis relating to healing, prosperity and what can be termed positive confession, they do not offer theological detail and are pejorative. For example, labels such as ‘name it and claim it’ may swiftly introduce concepts common in WoF, but they do so without the theological context associated with those terms. Thus, such succinct labels risk becoming over-simplifications. Furthermore, terms like ‘prosperity gospel’ may vividly indicate the importance of one key theme – material provision – but Brogdon, for example, identifies eight types of prosperity emphases, which suggests considerably more complexity within the subject.⁹ As Brogdon’s example in relation to types of prosperity demonstrates, further insight into what is meant by ‘Word of Faith’ can be gained via engagement with secondary sources. So, next I review almost 45 years of research into WoF theology.

⁸ Kate Bowler, *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁹ Lewis Brogdon, *The New Pentecostal Message? An Introduction to the Prosperity Movement* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade, 2015), 11-12.

Literature review: Beyond health and wealth?

Formal academic engagement with WoF began in the late 1970s with work such as Charles Farah's *From the Pinnacle of the Temple*.¹⁰ This was followed by D. R. McConnell's *A Different Gospel/The Promise of Health and Wealth* during the 1980s.¹¹ In the roughly four decades since academic work on WoF began, a range of literature approaching the subject from historical, sociological and theological perspectives has been added to the academy. The more recent treatments include Bowler's *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel* (2013),¹² Brogdon's *An Introduction to the Prosperity Movement* (2015),¹³ Ackerley's *Importing Faith: The Effect of American 'Word of Faith' Culture on Contemporary English Evangelical Revivalism* (2016) and latterly Stenhammar's *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement: Eden Redeemed* (2022).¹⁴

My literature review focuses on the most theologically-orientated (as opposed to sociological or historical) sources with a view to using them to identify key themes and the most influential debates relating to WoF. Focusing on the most theologically-orientated sources facilitates the identification of the theological features most important to the structure of WoF. Such an approach also lays the groundwork for critical analysis of the interconnectedness of those theological features. In addition, the literature review focuses on secondary sources because they necessarily engage with the requisite primary sources. Otherwise, direct engagement with the vast volume of primary and popular devotional material associated with WoF at this stage would be prohibitive.

¹⁰ Charles Farah, *From the Pinnacle of the Temple* (Plainfield: Logos International, 1979).

¹¹ McConnell, *The Promise*. *The Promise of Health and Wealth* is the UK title of the earlier US edition – *A Different Gospel* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988). Both were based on McConnell's 1982 Oral Roberts University Master's thesis: "The Kenyon connection: a theological and historical analysis of the cultic origins of the Faith Movement." Therefore, the various incarnations of this work span across the 1980s.

¹² Bowler, *Blessed*.

¹³ Brogdon, *The New Pentecostal Message?*

¹⁴ Glyn Ackerley, *Importing Faith: The Effect of American 'Word of Faith' Culture on Contemporary English Evangelical Revivalism* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2016). Mikael Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement: Eden Redeemed* (London: T&T Clark, 2022).

Secondary literature on the theology of WoF can be organised roughly chronologically into three thematic groups; 1970s to 1990s – The Kenyon connection thesis, 1990s to 2000s – Answering the Kenyon connection, and 2000 onwards – Constructive accounts and alternative perspectives. The literature review starts in the 1970s because that was when the first academic literature analysing the movement was published. The three aforementioned 20-year periods reflect three periods in the history of WoF analysis. Using broadly chronological groupings helps introduce the main sources and topics that have shaped criticism of the movement since its inception. Such an approach also helps highlight the developing understanding of which WoF teachings represent core theological features, while also asking how those features relate to each other.

1970s to 1990s - The Kenyon connection group

What we might call Kenyon connection literature is a collection of the earliest academic writing directly addressing WoF,¹⁵ although the term Word of Faith was not consistently used at this early point. This grouping represents the first phase of secondary source research relating to WoF. Precisely because it represents the first phase of research, this group in general and McConnell's work in particular are especially significant to the development of WoF criticism. While McConnell's work was not the first to be published, I gather those writings together under McConnell's terminology ('the Kenyon connection') because they were written around the same time, use similar language and come to similar conclusions.¹⁶

¹⁵ The first and earliest group of research consists of: Charles Farah, "A Critical Analysis: The Roots and Shoots of Faith-Formula Theology," *Pneuma* (1981). *Pinnacle of the Temple*; "A Critical Analysis." McConnell, *The Promise*. Gordon Fee, *The Disease of the Health & Wealth Gospels* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 1985).

¹⁶ Several key authors having studied within or taught at Oral Roberts University. McConnell and Farah, for example.

These works demonstrate varying degrees of sympathy with WoF believers,¹⁷ but the group uniformly reject WoF theology, sometimes decrying it as heresy. The primary reason for that collective rejection is McConnell's thesis that Kenyon based his teaching on 'un-orthodox' North American metaphysical principles, which manifested in groups such as New Thought and later Christian Science.¹⁸ While the Kenyon connection group's thesis is largely historical, their argument is that their historical thesis enables the drawing of theological conclusions. The central premise and conclusion can be paraphrased thus: if Kenyon propagated 'cultic' metaphysical teaching, then Kenneth E. Hagin (the apparent 'father' of the contemporary movement) and WoF is 'cultic' and therefore 'heresy'.¹⁹ Consequently, the term 'Kenyon connection' has a two-fold meaning referring to both Kenyon's connection to New England metaphysical groups as the originators of his theology as well as Kenyon's connection to Hagin as the inspiration for Hagin's theology. With that in mind, it would be remiss not to critically evaluate the texts in the Kenyon connection group both due to the importance of their respective claims on later readings and because of their relevance to understanding the theological structure of WoF.

The origins of the Kenyon connection thesis can be found in the writings of Charles Farah who criticized what he saw as the presumption of many WoF preachers. While remaining broadly sympathetic overall,²⁰ Farah significantly increased his criticism and concluded that WoF was a 'burgeoning heresy' in the time following his first published work on the subject.²¹

¹⁷ McConnell, *The Promise*, 19.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30-56.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, xxii, 3.

²⁰ Farah, *Pinnacle of the Temple*, 18-21; "A Critical Analysis."

²¹ "A Critical Analysis," 21.

Farah makes clear the connection between Hagin and Kenyon, but the case for Kenyon's connection with metaphysics is not made.²² Specifically, Farah suggests Kenyon is the 'treasure trove' from which WoF mines its theological gems.²³ Farah also criticises Kenyon, arguing that he should have taught the difference between 'logos' and 'rhema' words more thoroughly. However, Hagin and later WoF sources also teach that there is a difference between 'logos' and 'rhema'.²⁴ More specifically, Hagin suggests believers can engage in a process that results in 'logos' becoming 'rhema'.²⁵ Rather than suggesting that WoF is unorthodox in comparison with classical Pentecostalism and the broader charismatic renewal, Farah's logos/rhema example raises further questions relating to similarities and differences between WoF and broader Pentecostal and charismatic belief.

Nevertheless, Farah's description of Kenyon as a theological 'treasure trove' identifies the importance of belief in the creative and destructive power of the spoken words of the believer – what can be termed positive and negative confession – in WoF.²⁶ In addition, teachings such as sensory denial – the belief that spiritual revelation is ontologically superior to that which is revealed by the physical senses, summarised in a term coined by Vreeland – are also introduced as a central part of WoF.²⁷ Farah identifies one type of prosperity teaching – the belief that it is God's will for believers to prosper financially and materially – as the theological product of the same reasoning.²⁸ Therefore, in Farah we can

²² Ibid., 7. On the contrary, Farah's quote highlights Kenyon's difference in comparison with Christian Science.

²³ Ibid., 6.

²⁴ Roy H. Hicks, "Rhema: The Spoken Word," *The Word of Faith* (1974).

²⁵ Versions of the logos/rhema concept are common in WoF circles, for example: Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Key to the Supernatural* (Tulsa: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1979), 29.

²⁶ Farah, "A Critical Analysis," 6.

²⁷ Ibid., 6-7. Farah alludes to sensory denial. McConnell drew parallels with gnostic ideas of 'turning away from sensory knowledge'. McConnell, *The Promise*, 109. However, the term 'sensory denial' appears to have been coined by Vreeland. See Derek Vreeland, "Reconstructing Word of Faith Theology: A Defense, Analysis and Refinement of the Theology of the Word of Faith Movement," in *Society for Pentecostal Studies* (2002).

²⁸ "Everything has to do with the here and now, healing now, wealth now, prosperity now as the right and heritage of every believing Christian." Farah, "A Critical Analysis," 9.

begin to form a picture of which theological elements are most important to WoF. And positive confession, sensory denial as well as healing and prosperity predominate. No explicit theological system is described, but the suggestion that WoF believers see confession and sensory denial as in some way causal to health and wealth is introduced and debated.

Daniel R. McConnell's *The Promise of Health and Wealth...*,²⁹ is amongst the most cited texts on the subject of WoF theology, advancing the thesis that WoF theology in general and Kenyon's teaching in particular find their roots in the North American metaphysical movement of the late nineteenth century.³⁰ Amongst the first peer-reviewed secondary sources in the field, at publication McConnell's work was the longest analysis solely focusing on WoF for more than a decade until Andrew Perriman's *Health, Wealth and Prosperity* was published by the UK Evangelical Alliance in 2003. As part of its central Kenyon Connection argument, *The Promise of Health and Wealth* also offers an overview of WoF's teachings as well as a critical analysis in relation to their supposed metaphysical roots.³¹

From the outset, McConnell's stated aim is to theologically defend evangelical and charismatic ground against WoF.³² McConnell argues that 'because [WoF's] historical root is cultic, the theological fruit is cultic as well',³³ centralising that particular thesis within the overall argument. The connection between Hagin and Kenyon is clearly demonstrated.³⁴ But

²⁹ McConnell, *The Promise*.

³⁰ Smail, Walker, and Wright, "Revelation Knowledge," 60. Smail, Walker and Wright is an example of work supportive of the Kenyon connection thesis advanced by McConnell. William De Arteaga, *Quenching the Spirit: Examining Centuries of Opposition to the Moving of the Holy Spirit* (Florida: Creation House, 1992), 221. Directly answers McConnell. Robert M. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy: Understanding the Health and Wealth Gospel* (Baker Books, 2001). Bowman repeatedly engages with McConnell, citing him 17 times. Paul L. King, *Only Believe: Examining the Origin and Development of the Classic and Contemporary Word of Faith Theologies* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Word and Spirit Press, 2008). King cites McConnell 44 times. Indeed, virtually every detailed study of WoF theology either cites or engages with McConnell.

³¹ McConnell, *The Promise*, 103.

³² Having said that, the title also demonstrates of the work's efforts to avoid hyperbole. Comparing the UK and US titles, we can see the softening of the US version's pre-colon "A Different Gospel" in favour of "The Promise of Health and Wealth", which can be read as a bid to adopt a more irenic tone than Fee's *The Disease of the Health and Wealth Gospel* or Farah's *The Pinnacle of the Temple*, both of which were published before the UK edition.

³³ McConnell, *The Promise*, 19.

³⁴ See McConnell's chapters on "The true father of the modern faith movement" (Kenyon) and "The Kenyon connection". Ibid., 3-14 and 30-36 respectively.

the connection between Kenyon and New Thought is almost completely reliant on circumstantial evidence that Kenyon studied in New England at around the same time as some New Thought groups began, supported by the interpretation of those events by secondary sources.³⁵ But, if the historicity of the Kenyon-connection thesis is flawed or incomplete as some sources have suggested,³⁶ alternative roots must be uncovered. And that relates to my theological analysis of WoF because the issue of WoF origins directly affects understanding WoF doctrine. Indeed, McConnell's Kenyon-connection thesis is a common feature of analyses of WoF and its theological conclusions are drawn from McConnell's historical arguments.³⁷

Nevertheless, McConnell's key development relates to the interconnectedness of different WoF features, specifically his suggestion that revelation knowledge is central and that the Jesus Died Spiritually (JDS) and faith doctrines orbit around that belief. What is implicit in the text, but not articulated, is that McConnell's centralisation of revelation knowledge makes WoF a kind of theological system, which aims to produce the outcomes of healing and prosperity. Furthermore, because trichotomy is linked to themes as disparate as identification and deification via WoF's 'God kind of faith' reading of Mark 11:22-24 – as well as JDS,³⁸ connections between all five of the doctrines McConnell identifies can be found in McConnell's analysis. As a result, the apparent connections between the various WoF doctrines and sub-doctrines could be seen as a system of beliefs. Therefore, my research critically analyses the theological interconnectedness of the WoF's doctrinal features rather than various doctrines and practices in isolation from each other.

³⁵ Ibid., 26.

³⁶ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 83.

Riss, "Kenyon, Essek William."

Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity*, 219.

³⁷ McConnell, *The Promise*, 15-26.

³⁸ Ibid., 107.

1990s to 2000s - Answering the Kenyon Connection thesis

Bruce Barron's more sympathetic *The Health and Wealth Gospel* pre-emptively addresses a number of the Kenyon Connection group's criticisms.³⁹ However, it is also less academically rigorous than the other sources of this period owing to its approach as a pastoral narrative investigation of WoF. Nevertheless, probably because Barron enrolled on Hagin's Rhema Bible Training Centre correspondence course as a means of immersing himself in the movement's teachings, Barron uncovers important details pertaining to WoF's theological context such as healing movement and early Pentecostal Lillian B. Yeoman's favoured place on the Rhema course reading list and as potential originator of the positive confession doctrine.⁴⁰ Barron identifies healing, prosperity and positive confession as the three central features of WoF, but does not develop Farah and McConnell's work in terms of identifying additional theological features or connections between.⁴¹

The next response to the Kenyon Connection group's initial phase of WoF research was American researcher and charismatic Episcopalian healing minister William De Arteaga's *Quenching the Spirit*.⁴² As the opening endorsements from leading WoF figures as well as Pentecostal leaders such as Jack Hayford and Lester Sumrall indicate,⁴³ *Quenching the Spirit* was a response to the more critical sources within the Kenyon Connection group period.⁴⁴

³⁹ Bruce Barron, *The Health and Wealth Gospel: What's Going on Today in a Movement That Has Shaped the Faith of Millions?* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1987).

⁴⁰ Ibid., 183 n70.

⁴¹ Ibid., 9.

⁴² Published by an imprint of Strang Communications, the publisher of WoF-leaning Charisma magazine, the book opens to an array of endorsements by ministers close to or involved in WoF, with some geographically located in its adopted spiritual home of Tulsa, Oklahoma. De Arteaga, *Quenching the Spirit*. Four years later a revised edition changed the title to *Quenching the Spirit: Discover the Real Spirit Behind the Charismatic Controversy* (Creation House, 1996).

⁴³ Specifically: Billy Joe Daugherty (pastor of Victory Christian Centre in Tulsa, Oklahoma); Charles Green (pastor of WoF Christian Fellowship, New Orleans, Louisiana); Wallace and Marilyn Hickey (Happy Church in Denver, Colorado); Ray Macauley (founder of Rhema Ministries, South Africa); and even Oral Roberts (representing Oral Roberts University, which is based in Tulsa, Oklahoma).

⁴⁴ Such was its impact, the updated edition of *A Different Gospel* included a response to William De Arteaga. Derek Vreeland, "Reconstructing Word of Faith Theology," *Refleks* (2002): 3.

In some ways *Quenching the Spirit* is a mirror image of McConnell's work, using a quasi-historical approach as the framework for its theological analysis. However, apart from that similarity, it is a reflection in the most literal sense – De Arteaga's book largely heads in the opposite direction to McConnell's work. Unlike the Kenyon Connection group, De Arteaga is unmistakably sympathetic to WoF. In contrast to the way WoF is portrayed in McConnell's work, De Arteaga's approach illustrates his decision to situate WoF right in the midst of the broader charismatic renewal as opposed to being outside the wider movement. Indeed, while the book is presented as an examination of 'centuries of opposition to the moving of the Holy Spirit' in general,⁴⁵ detailed and often apologetic analysis of WoF appears throughout parts III, IV and V of this six-part book. A large proportion of those three sections engage with WoF, specifically addressing the claims of both Farah and McConnell. The strength of De Arteaga's work is its engagement with WoF because it provides valuable insight and much-needed dialogue with the, by this stage, well-rehearsed Kenyon Connection group's arguments. However, De Arteaga's overarching conclusion that many criticisms of 20th century North American charismatic Christianity are motivated by a 'pharisaical spirit' is in danger of being dismissive of legitimate concerns about the problematic aspects of WoF theology.⁴⁶

Rather than accepting that Kenyon had simply 'baptised many concepts from Christian Science',⁴⁷ De Arteaga sees Kenyon's work as a pre-Pentecostal reaction to New Thought theology.⁴⁸ De Arteaga argues that such reactive momentum naturally fused with nineteenth century divine healing movement theology of healing in the atonement, forming a 'quantum theology' and 'idealist hermeneutic'. Together, De Arteaga argues, those concepts

⁴⁵ De Arteaga, *Quenching the Spirit*, Cover.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 255.

⁴⁷ McConnell, *The Promise*, 15.

⁴⁸ De Arteaga, *Quenching the Spirit*, 204.

established the basis of contemporary WoF theology.⁴⁹ Both concepts therefore offer alternative theological frameworks for engagement with and analysis of WoF theology.⁵⁰ In short, De Arteaga suggests that Kenyon and Agnes Sanford sought to reclaim New Thought's certainty and approach to subjects like healing via a process of 'biblical filtration'.⁵¹

Since De Arteaga introduces 'revelation knowledge' as a product of the idealist hermeneutic, and because 'revelation knowledge' appears to be privileged above 'sense knowledge' in Kenyon,⁵² one possible outworking of such 'revelation knowledge' is the doctrine of sensory denial. While *Quenching the Spirit* was written in answer to McConnell's Kenyon-connection work, from a theological perspective, De Arteaga actually supports McConnell's suggestions of interconnectedness between WoF's theological features. Indeed, De Arteaga indirectly suggests 'quantum theology' produces an 'idealist hermeneutic',⁵³ leading to a belief in 'revelation knowledge' and resulting in sensory denial practices such as positive confession in the hope of physical healing and/or material provision. Therefore, De Arteaga's work points to an unarticulated theological system behind WoF.

2000 onwards - Constructive accounts and alternate perspectives

Thus far in the history of theological accounts of WoF, virtually all the sources were either largely critical analyses (as in the case of the Kenyon Connection group) or more sympathetic re-readings. While not uncritical of WoF, Robert Bowman's *The Word Faith Controversy* (2001) rigorously contests the Kenyon connection on both historical and theological grounds,

⁴⁹ Ibid., 207.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 138.

⁵¹ Ibid., 163.

⁵² Ibid., 207.

⁵³ De Arteaga, *Quenching the Spirit: Discover the Real Spirit Behind the Charismatic Controversy*, 138-46.

ultimately concluding that ‘Kenyon’s theology cannot be understood wholly or even principally in terms of New Thought’.⁵⁴ Instead, Bowman suggests Kenyon should be read in terms of Kenyon’s pre-Pentecostal and Pentecostal heritage and that the movement ultimately has complex roots.⁵⁵ After evaluating the five theological features McConnell offers as the constituent parts of WoF, Bowman suggests replacing revelation knowledge with trichotomy.⁵⁶ In other words, in Bowman’s view revelation knowledge (as well as the rest of the WoF doctrine) is theologically reliant on trichotomy. *The Word-Faith Controversy* also identifies faith,⁵⁷ deification,⁵⁸ positive confession,⁵⁹ and JDS as key features of WoF.⁶⁰ Bowman’s work on WoF concepts of faith develops McConnell’s ‘God kind of Faith’ explanation by using the language of Greek grammar to distinguish between readings of Mark 11:22-24. Having the ‘faith *of* God’ is therefore described as the ‘subjective use of the genitive’.⁶¹

Ultimately, Bowman’s use of the language of ‘structure’ further highlights the interdependence of different features of WoF theology.⁶² Specifically, Bowman’s emphasis on the centrality of trichotomy suggests trichotomy could be at the foundation of any hypothetical WoF system.

Derek Vreeland’s ‘Reconstructing WoF Theology’ moved towards the advancement of a constructive theology of WoF.⁶³ After introducing the arguments against and in defence of WoF, Vreeland offers a series of reflections ‘reconstructing various key features including

⁵⁴ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 55.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 41, 84.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 98.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 105, 93.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 123.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 147.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 179.

⁶¹ Ibid., 107.

⁶² Ibid., 98.

⁶³ Vreeland also challenged the suggestion that WoF-style prosperity teaching was an exclusively North American phenomenon. Derek Vreeland, "P.G. Vargis and the Indian Prosperity Gospel," in *Society for Pentecostal Studies* (2001).

faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity by correcting rather than condemning controversial WoF teaching'.⁶⁴ Vreeland identifies faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity as key features of WoF.

Along with the addition of a significant degree of nuance came the advancing of different perspectives on WoF – especially writing from different ethnic and methodological perspectives. For example, Milmon Harrison published *Righteous Riches: The Word of Faith Movement in Contemporary African American Religion* in 2005 – the first African American account of WoF in more than two decades of publishing on the subject.⁶⁵ Separately, in 2015 Lewis Brogdon's *An introduction to the Prosperity Movement...* advanced an emic-style reading that stands in the tradition of Harrison's work.⁶⁶ Brogdon's work is distinct from both the Kenyon connection group and the Answering the Kenyon connection group because Brogdon's thesis is that prosperity teaching (a term he uses at least partly synonymously with WoF) is really Pentecostal in history and theology, beginning with the likes of Allen and Oral Roberts – and therefore does not originate from the more widely accepted history of WoF in Kenyon and the pre-Pentecostal nineteenth century divine healing movement.⁶⁷ This allows him to distance prosperity from WoF and its alleged metaphysical roots,⁶⁸ but also maintain a modified version of prosperity teaching.

Brogdon rejects the 'prescribed theological categories' often accepted in the history of WoF analysis. He specifically refuses to rely on 'white mainline and evangelical theologies to speak to the experience of marginalization, to judge the indigenous and contextual theologies' which may 'ignore the poor and marginalized altogether'. Rather he advances a liberation-type prosperity theology with the 'hope for a better life because [WoF/prosperity]

⁶⁴ "Reconstructing Word of Faith Theology," 2.

⁶⁵ Harrison, *Righteous Riches*.

⁶⁶ Brogdon, *The New Pentecostal Message?*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁶⁸ McConnell, *The Promise*, 103-04.

is rooted in a theology that insists God cares about the experience of poverty and marginalization.’⁶⁹

However, Brogdon’s theological thesis raises historical questions of its own. Did prosperity teaching really begin in the 1940s? Earlier examples of prosperity teaching include *The Path to Wealth* by T. S. Lincott, published in 1888.⁷⁰ Neither does Brogdon’s historical foundation address the influence of Kenyon in the early 20th century as well as later via Hagin. While the conclusion that prosperity teaching began much earlier than Brogdon suggests may seem to support the general thesis of a separation between prosperity in particular and WoF in general, finding other sources of WoF may serve to re-connect the movement and wider evangelicalism and Pentecostalism.

Published in 2003, Andrew Perriman’s *Health, Wealth and Prosperity* represented a sea-change in approaches to WoF.⁷¹ Like Vreeland, Perriman adopts an irenic approach. However, Perriman goes much further and offers one of the most detailed and nuanced engagements with WoF available. This work’s irenic approach is clearest when, in its conclusion, it opts to both criticise WoF and challenge evangelicals to be more radical in their expressions of faith and even learn from WoF.⁷² Perriman’s *Faith, Health and Prosperity* also literally invites dialogue with WoF in its conclusion, but that invitation has so far been left unanswered.⁷³ However, Perriman’s work is not without criticism from Black Majority churches within the contemporary British evangelical establishment.⁷⁴ In *Look What the Lord Has Done*, former African and Caribbean Evangelical Alliance general director, Mark Sturge

⁶⁹ Brogdon, *The New Pentecostal Message?*, 88-89.

⁷⁰ T. S. Lincott, *The Path to Wealth: Or Light from My Forge* (Richmond, Virginia: B. F. Johnson & Co., 1888).

⁷¹ Andrew Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003).

⁷² Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 230.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁷⁴ Many Black Majority churches are members of the Evangelical Alliance or were members of the now defunct African Caribbean Evangelical Alliance - ACEA. “Black Majority” is Sturge’s preferred term, which is not without its opponents. See Mark Sturge, *Look What the Lord Has Done* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 2005), 31.

suggests that draft conclusions within *Faith, Health and Prosperity* were less critical of WoF but were watered down before publication for political reasons.⁷⁵

Paul King's *Only Believe* traces 'faith' teaching from the early church fathers up to the 19th century healing movement. From here, King contrasts what he calls classic faith teaching with contemporary WoF.⁷⁶ Only brief attention is paid to defining WoF.⁷⁷ However, King broadly concurs with Bowman and McConnell, defining many of the same beliefs as key features of WoF, including: healing in the atonement, prosperity, positive confession, revelation knowledge and the authority of the believer.

William Atkinson's 2007 PhD thesis 'A Theological Appraisal of the Doctrine that Jesus Died Spiritually, as Taught by Kenyon, Hagin and Copeland' was the first and is so far the only critical evaluation of JDS teaching – making it a key resource for further research into that particular doctrine. Ultimately Atkinson rejects JDS on the basis that it 'undermines the traditional forms of trinitarianism, incarnationism and atonement theology'.⁷⁸ Atkinson's work also highlights the theological interdependence of WoF trichotomy and JDS, which provides a useful platform upon which to build a constructive theology of WoF.

Kate Bowler's 2010 PhD thesis 'Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel' offers a detailed and nuanced historical introduction of the North American prosperity gospel, which was subsequently published by Oxford University Press in 2013.⁷⁹ Bowler's central thesis is that the prosperity gospel – a term that she uses broadly synonymously with WoF – is based on a fusion of New Thought and Pentecostal theology with expectations of the socially-inculcated 'American dream'. That argument situates *Blessed* as a theological development of the Kenyon-connection thesis. The difference is that,

⁷⁵ Ibid., 71.

⁷⁶ King, *Only Believe*, 17.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 14.

⁷⁸ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 259.

⁷⁹ Bowler, *Blessed*.

like Bowman and De Arteaga before her, Bowler accepts the idea that there were crosscurrents between New Thought groups and Kenyon. However, Bowler also acknowledges New Thought's influence on the church as a whole as opposed to Kenyon exclusively.⁸⁰ Bowler identifies faith, health, wealth and victory as common features of WoF,⁸¹ which once again is suggestive of an integrated theological system.

Pavel Hejzlar's 'Two Paradigms for Divine Healing: Fred F. Bosworth, Kenneth E. Hagin, Agnes Sanford, and Francis Macnutt in Dialogue' continues the trend towards offering more detailed analyses of WoF's constituent parts albeit less directly than Atkinson and Bowler. Hejzlar's work is also more theological than historical in approach, offering a comparative study of key contemporary healing methodologies – one of which is the classic WoF approach. Hejzlar's conclusion seeks to merge the strengths and challenge the weaknesses of the various parties' theologies, offering a new constructive theology of faith healing that is neither wholly WoF or of the MacNutt/Sanford line. At times Hejzlar's work verges on support for WoF teaching on healing, specifically praising the movement's emphasis on scriptural grounds for healing.⁸² But ultimately Hejzlar offers a new faith theology of healing. The focus of Hejzlar's work on Hagin and Bosworth's healing theology make it an important resource for research on WoF healing. At the same time, Hejzlar's work supports the validity of a constructive theology of faith and healing in WoF.

Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong's compilation of chapters on Pentecostalism and Prosperity offers a variety of perspectives on the subject of prosperity,⁸³ acknowledging multiple definitions of prosperity as well as an interdisciplinary approach. Yong's chapter 'A Typology of Prosperity Theology' as well as its collation of work from a variety of

⁸⁰ Ibid., 264n7.

⁸¹ Ibid., 3.

⁸² Pavel Hejzlar, "Two Paradigms for Divine Healing: Fred F. Bosworth, Kenneth E. Hagin, Agnes Sanford, and Francis Macnutt in Dialogue" (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 260.

⁸³ Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

perspectives on the subject, highlights the need for my research to engage with such diversity of opinion in any analysis of the specific area of prosperity. Owing to their work's distinction between prosperity as a term for WoF and the particular belief in financial provision as well as its identification of a breadth of prosperity theologies, Attanasi and Yong's work is most relevant to my chapter on prosperity.

Wonsuk Ma's 'Blessing in Pentecostal Theology and Mission' sets out to 'investigate theological elements of the Prosperity Gospel' with a view to 're-visioning' it as a 'theology of blessing',⁸⁴ warning that 'there is no such thing as THE prosperity gospel, but many prosperity gospels'.⁸⁵ Ma identifies what he sees as the key theological features of the movement: the belief in divine material reciprocity in answer to human initiated giving, also known as seed-faith teaching;⁸⁶ 'already in redemption' belief in 'a euphoric realized eschatology',⁸⁷ which Kenyon referred to as 'new creation realities' and are known as 'in Him realities' elsewhere in WoF;⁸⁸ 'faith and power of word';⁸⁹ and 'praying through', which Ma describes as 'not stop praying until there is assurance from God'.⁹⁰

Ma stresses that there 'is no "pure" type' of what I term Word of Faith theology. Rather, he states that every preacher 'combines two or more, or even all the theological traits', suggesting that WoF theology is in some sense systematic. Indeed, the fact that Ma suggests that WoF believers adhere to two or more of 'already in redemption', 'realized eschatology', 'in Him realities' and 'faith and power of word' points to compatibility

⁸⁴ Wonsuk Ma, "Blessing in Pentecostal Theology and Mission," in *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, ed. Veli-Matti Karkkainen Wonsuk Ma, J Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, 2014), 272, 73, 90.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 273.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 276.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 277.

⁸⁸ E. W. Kenyon, *New Creation Realities*, 24th printing ed. (Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, Inc., 2011).

Mark Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth: The Life and Teachings of the Apostle Paul* (Alexandria, Louisiana: Mark Hankins Ministries, 2010), 131-36.

⁸⁹ Ma, "Blessing in Pentecostal Theology," 278.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 279. — "spiritual warfare" is also identified as a less important, but potentially more problematic additional trait.

between the traits, if not an outright system. Confusingly, Ma's subsequent example of Yonggi Cho connects 'healing in the atonement', 'positive confession', 'faith' and 'prosperity' as key traits – a different combination than was introduced earlier in the chapter. Taken together, the two lists make a combined group of theological traits that once again suggest a system, even if this is not explicitly articulated by Ma.

The 'Constructive accounts and alternate perspectives' group of sources show that the Kenyon connection thesis is still influential, but it is also being modified. In addition, the secondary sources show broad consensus on what theological features are evident in WoF. Particular doctrines of faith, positive confession, JDS, radical belief in atonement healing and trichotomy predominate – but the latest research also suggests there are a variety of ways of interpreting the meaning of each feature. Once again, that point illustrates the need for a constructive theology of WoF analysing each feature and elucidating the interconnections between each of them.

Bowman and Atkinson's research is particularly useful for examining the interconnectedness of features as both sources further develop the work of the preceding two groups in the literature review. Where Farah and McConnell laid the groundwork for a structural theology of WoF; and where De Arteaga highlighted the theological momentum behind it; Bowman and Atkinson explicitly identify the centrality of trichotomy and theoretical interdependence with JDS, pointing to an as-yet undetermined network of beliefs.

Overall, the secondary sources point to the interconnectedness of a number of WoF theological features. Specifically, trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS stand out as the most commonly-identified features, with others nesting within them. However, no sources have explicitly analysed how those features interact with each other. Neither have they assessed whether the various features function as a system.

For a theology rooted in the often-loud preaching of evangelical revivalism and nascent Pentecostalism, the voice of WoF in the academy has been surprisingly muted. As Rudolf von Sinner says, concluding his study of South American prosperity teaching, ‘...there is very little sophisticated theological discussion on a theology of prosperity.’⁹¹ Others, such as Mark Sturge, have literally invited theological analysis and engagement on the subject of WoF and especially from within the movement.⁹² However, certainly as far as an emic response is concerned, these calls have remained unanswered.⁹³

Hypothesis: Word of Faith is a system of interconnected beliefs

In order to address the identified problems of definition, insight and analysis, my research hypothesises that WoF is a system of six interconnected theological features. Those features are derived from the most prominent themes identified in the literature. Some are explicitly taught as doctrine others are implicit and even pre-supposed. The term theological feature refers to both the explicitly taught doctrines and the implicit theology, specifically trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS. By critically evaluating my hypothesis, this research aims to advance a constructive theology of Word of Faith, arguing that Word of Faith theology operates as a system.

The hypothetical system of six interconnected theological features represents the development of the three frameworks identified in literature review. The first phase of WoF research brought with it the suggestion that certain WoF features have a premise/product relationship with the belief in healing and prosperity. The second phase suggests that an

⁹¹ Rudolf von Sinner, "'Struggling with Africa': Theology of Prosperity in and from Brazil " in *Pastures of Plenty: Tracing Religio-Scapes of Prosperity Theologies in Africa and Beyond*, ed. Andreas Heuser (Frankfurt: Peter Lang 2015), 120.

⁹² Sturge, *Look What the Lord Has Done*, 31.

⁹³ *Ibid.* Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 235. von Sinner, "'Struggling with Africa': Theology of Prosperity in and from Brazil " 130. All three call for WoF sources to engage with their research as well as the wider corpus. And all three call for dialogue between WoF and more broadly Pentecostal sources.

idealist hermeneutic results in a belief in revelation knowledge privileged above physical sensation, resulting in WoF's particular beliefs about faith as well as sensory denial and positive confession. The third phase confirmed the importance of these and other theological features such as trichotomy and JDS to the structure of WoF, particularly emphasising trichotomy as foundational to the WoF system.

Taking into account the more recent research, my hypothetical framework suggests WoF builds on the foundation of a trichotomous anthropology, which acts as a theological means of accessing WoF's particular brand of supernatural faith. These concepts are practiced temporally and physically via verbal and practical demonstrations of faith (positive confession and sensory denial), which are believed to result in manifestations of physical healing and financial prosperity. Because JDS can be seen as theologically interdependent with trichotomy, JDS is also a part of the hypothetical system (see figure 1).

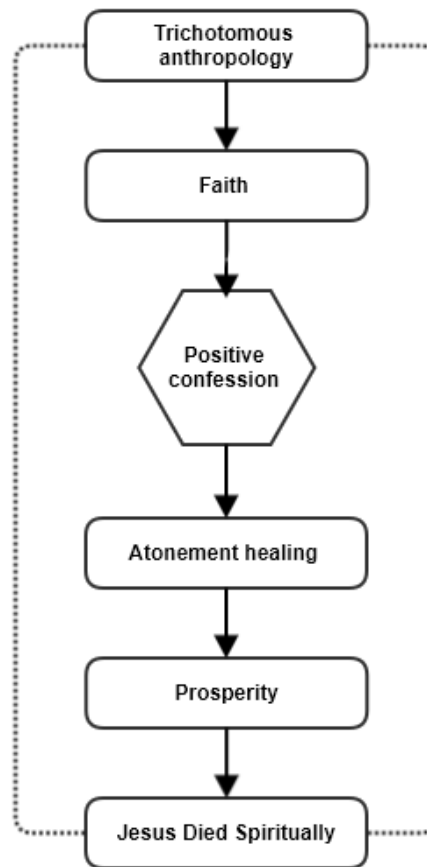


Figure 1 – Word of Faith as a hypothetical system of six interconnected theological features

In addition, we must acknowledge that three of WoF's six key features are immaterial theological concepts (trichotomy, faith and JDS), while the remaining three are faith activities – theological concepts that are necessarily demonstrated in WoF (such as positive confession), pushing towards material outcomes (atonement healing and financial prosperity).

The features can also be grouped into two premise-and-products-style sets with trichotomous anthropology, faith and positive confession being the 'premises' and radical atonement healing, financial prosperity and JDS being the 'products'. That would mean that the hypothetical system results in or produces two practical outcome doctrines (radical atonement healing and financial prosperity) and one immaterial theological product (JDS),

but an internally consistent methodology as well as methodical approach is needed in order to assess Word of Faith's status as a theological system.

Methodology: analysing the six identified features of WoF

This thesis focuses on six features of WoF selected from those most commonly identified in the secondary research on the basis that they demonstrate interconnection and reliance and so could represent a system. These particular features (trichotomy, faith, positive confession/sensory denial, atonement healing, prosperity and Jesus Died Spiritually) are critically analysed in each chapter because – according to the hypothesis – these component parts generate theological momentum that leads from one to the next, resulting in a system. By analysing the hypothetical framework one feature at a time, the hypothesis can be critically evaluated both as its constituent parts and ultimately as a whole.

The literature shows that WoF's 'unique vernacular' and 'rhetorical language' birthed at least in proximity to Pentecostal movements have at times presented methodological difficulties.⁹⁴ Therefore, this project's theological focus is situated within a Pentecostal hermeneutical and ecumenical theological context.⁹⁵ Pentecostal hermeneutics allow the interpretative flexibility necessary to decode such a "unique vernacular" and its apparent contradictions. WoF treatment of Scripture is one such apparent contradiction because WoF is inherently 'Word' or Bible-centric, believing itself to be literalist in its approach to Scripture. However, the movement is also pneumatic and subjective. For example, Kenyon says he believes 'the integrity of the Word is the basis of faith' in a fundamentalist-sounding passage in *In His Presence*, which sounds like it could be compatible with a historical

⁹⁴ Smail, Walker, and Wright, "Revelation Knowledge," 58-59.

⁹⁵ Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture, and Community* (London: T&T Clark, 2004).

grammatical rationale.⁹⁶ However, Kenyon also says ‘reason will take the Word’s place if we allow it’, before continuing ‘The Word is the Father speaking to you’, which is entirely more subjective and arguably more pneumatic.⁹⁷

Each chapter is divided into two parts. The first part of each chapter contextualises one of the six identified theological features of WoF because most of the theological conclusions highlighted in the literature review are related to particular historical readings. Therefore, the theological roots of WoF are interrogated by re-analysing and critically evaluating the conclusions of the existing secondary literature and by interacting with the primary sources.

Once the theological history of each WoF feature is established, in the second part of each chapter, a critical analysis of the hypothetical theological system is undertaken by asking the following questions. First, is the analysed WoF feature theologically connected to the previous feature or does it occur independently from the others? Next, is the selected feature theologically dependent on the previous feature or can it exist in isolation from the preceding feature(s)?⁹⁸ Third, the strengths and weaknesses of WoF’s reading is then analysed in relation to the selected theological feature and critically evaluated. If the feature identified is part of an internally connected and cumulative system, what are the theological effects of such a reading? Finally, the second part of each chapter also asks how the hypothetical system can be modified in order to address any weaknesses, omissions and inconsistencies identified in the preceding analysis, resulting in a constructive development of a theological structure.

⁹⁶ E. W. Kenyon, *In His Presence*, 2011, 41st ed. (Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1944), 53.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 55 and 58 respectively.

⁹⁸ Since the first WoF feature, trichotomy, doesn’t have any preceding features in the hypothetical theological structure, the opening chapter asks why and if this should be seen as foundational to any hypothetical system.

Overview

Chapter 1: ‘Trichotomy’ analyses WoF’s trichotomous anthropology. Beginning with a theological history of trichotomy as it pertains to WoF, the chapter examines whether WoF is theologically reliant on its trichotomous anthropology in concordance with Bowman’s findings.⁹⁹ The chapter also critically evaluates whether WoF’s trichotomous anthropology lays the foundations for what Kenyon called ‘identification’, asking what theological function such beliefs perform.

Chapter 2: ‘Faith’ continues the two-stage methodology by examining WoF understandings of faith. As the moniker suggests, WoF has a particular ‘faith’ emphasis. With that in mind, the chapter begins its contextualisation by seeking to define WoF understandings of faith. The contextualisation specifically considers my discovery of the similarities of Hagin’s faith teaching with the writings of Cornelia Nuzum.

Having established an entry point into the WoF movement’s particular understanding of faith, the theological analysis further evaluates the connections between trichotomy and WoF notions of faith. It particularly analyses the ‘faith of God’ concept, otherwise known as the subjective genitive reading of Mark 11:22.

Chapter 3: ‘Positive confession’ seeks to define that term and establish its history, examining positive confession’s connection to other features such as sensory denial, asking if they result from WoF trichotomy and faith. Entering the subject through the writings of Kenneth E. Hagin, the contextualisation asks whether positive confession theology emanates from a broader range of sources than is generally accepted. Furthermore, the chapter asks if the sources identified in the first three chapters represent any kind of WoF source base.

⁹⁹ Robert M. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy: Understanding the Health and Wealth Gospel*, 2nd ed. (By the author, 2013), 98.

The theological analysis asks how positive confession relates to trichotomy and faith, and whether these features point onwards towards the other theological features of WoF. It also engages with questions relating to the role of function of both positive confession and the combination of trichotomy, faith and positive confession. From here, the problematic dimensions of the positive confession doctrine are critically evaluated.

Chapter 4: ‘Healing’ focuses on WoF’s particular doctrine of physical healing, especially focusing on the movement’s emphasis on atonement-healing. The contextualisation begins with Hagin’s most directly healing-related writings as an embarkation point into understanding the sources of Hagin’s theology of healing and to some extent the sources that influenced them. Taken together, this work helps clarify WoF’s doctrine of healing, whilst also offering an internal counter-point to any problematic theology discovered along the way.

The theological analysis asks whether the preceding feature – positive confession – is a particular motivation for WoF healing teaching. Radical atonement healing is also examined in relation to the preceding concepts of trichotomy, faith and positive confession. In particular, the question of whether healing and atonement have narrative functions in the interconnection of the different WoF features is examined.

Chapter 5: ‘Prosperity’ begins by contextualising prosperity as part of the overall goal of defining WoF theology, asking to what extent it is distinct from other WoF theology related to pre-existing divine financial beneficence teachings such as tithing. Specifically, the contextualisation re-reads Kenneth E. Hagin’s prosperity-related writings in search of his sources of prosperity doctrine. The discovery of a kind of extra-Kenyon, pre-Hagin Word of Faith source base informs the analysis of trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing before it. The contextualisation particularly engages with the writings of A. A. Swift as a key source of Hagin’s prosperity theology.

Like healing before it, prosperity is analysed with reference to whether or not it is theologically reliant on trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing. Picking up on the preceding chapter's discussion of healing and the potential narrative function of healing in any possible WoF system, the theological analysis asks whether prosperity has a narrative role to play. Furthermore, do healing and prosperity represent theological products of the features that precede them?

Chapter 6: 'Jesus Died Spiritually' analyses the controversial JDS doctrine in relation to trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity. As with every chapter in this thesis, it begins with a contextualisation section. The contextualisation enters the subject via Kenneth E. Hagin's various writings relating to spiritual death in order to meet the two-fold goal of defining what Hagin means by the term spiritual death and the origins of his theology of spiritual death. As well as bringing clarity to the definition of Hagin's terminology, contributing to knowledge relating to the theological context of JDS also aides theological analysis that feature. In particular, the writings of John Alexander Dowie and Edward Irving provide additional context for understanding WoF understanding of JDS.

The theological analysis then examines the interconnections between JDS and trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity. Questions relating to both the role and function of JDS in any WoF system are also examined. My decision to analyse JDS as the sixth and final chapter of the thesis is also scrutinised in light of the findings of the preceding five chapters.

CHAPTER 1: TRICHOTOMY

The term trichotomy refers to the belief that humans consist of spirit, soul and body. Belief in trichotomy contrasts with dichotomy, which suggests humans are composed of body and soul (often inferring the two parts are in opposition); and monism, which emphasises an understanding of the human constitution as a single whole. WoF sources use a range of language to summarise their position including: ‘three dimensions’,¹ ‘three-fold’,² and ‘three-part’ amongst other terms.³ I follow Robert Bowman and William Atkinson by generally using trichotomy as a single point of reference for such a range of language.⁴

My research proposes that WoF is a system of six interconnected beliefs, namely: trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS. Based on the literature review, this chapter argues that trichotomy is the foundational entry point into the network of six interconnected beliefs, something that is achieved by virtue of its ‘pneumocentric’ construction, to use Atkinson’s terminology.⁵ Since the chapter hypothesis states that trichotomy is both foundational and an entry point to the interconnected system, it also supposes that WoF trichotomy provides theological momentum towards the other theological features, specifically towards the next feature – faith.

The first section represents a historical contextualisation of trichotomy, followed by a theological analysis. That two-pronged approach is adopted because at several points in the literature review the need for further critical analysis of the theological history of WoF was

¹ Kenneth E Hagin, *Man on Three Dimensions: Volume 1 of the Spirit, Soul and Body Series*, 4th printing 1994 ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1974).

² E. W. Kenyon, *The Wonderful Name of Jesus* (Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Association, 1927).

³ Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Human Spirit; Volume 2 of the Spirit, Soul, and Body Series*, 9th printing, 1994 ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1985), 7, 8, 14. Andrew Wommack, *Spirit, Soul & Body* (Walsall: Andrew Wommack Ministries of Europe, 2005), 1. Wommack repeatedly uses “part” throughout *Spirit, Soul & Body*.

⁴ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 104-09. Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal.", 124.

⁵ See literature review, especially: Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 98. and Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 27.

identified. The historical limitations of the so-called Kenyon-connection was the main argument that exemplified that need. The literature review found that widespread acceptance of either the complete Kenyon-connection thesis or some variation of it has led to a tendency in the literature to draw theological conclusions from relatively inconclusive historical arguments, while at the same time overlooking more substantial historical connections and their theological implications.

Therefore, the first goal of the first part of each chapter is to contextualise WoF beliefs within their 19th and 20th century UK and North American settings, resulting in a more developed history of the belief as it pertains to WoF in order to inform both this project and wider scholarship on the subject. As a result of this historical-thematic theological contextualisation, the analysis is better equipped to achieve its goal of critically evaluating WoF trichotomy theology in the second part of the chapter.

The second goal of the contextualisation section of the chapter on trichotomy is to add to the understanding of WoF by better defining the language associated with trichotomy. For chapter one, this means defining not only what is meant by trichotomy in general, but specifically how WoF sources use the term and its synonyms, thereby developing the thus-far incomplete definition of both WoF trichotomy as well as WoF as a whole.

Having begun by identifying claims relating to the origin of WoF's trichotomy teaching in the secondary literature and critically analysing these claims, this first section of the chapter concludes by advancing a more developed theological history of WoF's trichotomy teaching and with it a clearer definition of the theological terms in use.

The second part of chapter one builds on the platform constructed by the contextualisation, advancing a critical analysis of WoF trichotomy in terms of its theological function. It begins by critically evaluating Robert Bowman's thesis that trichotomy is

foundational to any WoF theological system.⁶ Once questions relating to trichotomy's role as a foundation for and an entry point into the system have been addressed, the analysis continues by expressing trichotomy's ongoing function within the system. Finally, the analysis assesses if and how trichotomy is responsible for continuing momentum towards the other five theological features.

1.1 Word of Faith Trichotomy Origins and Terms

Building on the conclusions of key secondary sources identified in the literature review, the contextualisation starts by asking where classic WoF sources (namely Kenyon and Hagin) drew their inspiration in order to develop a thematic context for WoF trichotomy teaching. I also examine the definitions of key terms associated with WoF trichotomy.

Both McConnell and Bowman refer to the common WoF dictum 'I am a spirit, I possess a soul and I live in a body' as the most succinct summary of the movement's belief in trichotomy.⁷ A number of slight variations exist in later sources, but the phrase began with Kenyon around 1937, before being popularised by Hagin afterwards.⁸

The dictum encapsulates a number of key features of WoF trichotomy. First, it shows that trichotomy means more than that human beings are made up of three dimensions (spirit, soul and body) as opposed to monism (one whole) and dichotomy (soul and body).⁹ 'I am a spirit' implies what is said explicitly elsewhere – that 'the spirit is the real you'.¹⁰ That centring of

⁶ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 98.

⁷ McConnell, *The Promise*, 118. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 109.

"The Hidden Man of the Heart" in E. W. Kenyon, *Advanced Bible Course* (Seattle: Kenyon Gospel Publishing Society, 1937). Hagin, *Man on Three Dimensions*. Hagin, *The Human Spirit; Volume 2 of the Spirit, Soul, and Body Series*.

⁸ E. W. Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, 1964 ed. (Seattle: Kenyon Gospel Publishing Society, 1916), 56. Cf. Hagin, *Man on Three Dimensions*.

⁹ It is worth noting that soul and body can also be read not only as two parts, but as two parts in opposition to each other.

¹⁰ Wommack, *Spirit, Soul & Body*, 11. See also: Hagin, *Man on Three Dimensions*, 9-10. Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 36.

the human spirit within the anthropology is sometimes referred to as ‘pneumocentrism’ by secondary sources.¹¹ Furthermore, does the dictum’s suggestion that a person *is* a spirit rather than is composed of three dimensions including a spirit initiate a hierarchy within the human constitution, with the human spirit on top in ontologically superior terms? At the same time, in the dictum’s language, the human spirit is described as being in possession of the soul, with both the human spirit and soul inhabiting the body. Pre-supposing WoF’s trichotomous anthropology, McConnell draws parallels between the Keswick-originated doctrine of ‘identification’, WoF anthropology and the movement’s Christology.¹² As a consequence, McConnell connects trichotomy with other WoF features.¹³ Bowman takes that analysis further, suggesting WoF theology is dependent on trichotomy, concluding: ‘if the doctrine of trichotomy is false, the entire structure of Word-Faith theology is false’.¹⁴ All these points invite the contextual question: what influences led to the development of WoF’s particular trichotomy teaching? Or, to put it another way, where does WoF’s theology of trichotomy originate?

1.1.1 Early Sources of Word of Faith Anthropology

According to Matthew Churchouse’s research on the Pentecostal doctrine of the human constitution, trichotomy entered Pentecostalism in general and WoF in particular in the 1940s ‘due almost undoubtedly to the influence of (Watchman) Nee’.¹⁵ However, Churchouse also concedes that, in contrast to Nee, WoF sources ‘often stated that it is a person’s spirit, not the soul, that is the real “I” of a person’.¹⁶ As a result, WoF trichotomy can be distinguished from

¹¹ As William Atkinson found: Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 27 and 124.

¹² McConnell, *The Promise*, 118-25.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁴ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 98.

¹⁵ Matthew Churchouse, "Renewing the Soul: Towards an Enhanced Pentecostal Philosophical Theological Doctrine of Human Constitution" (University of Birmingham, 2017), 26.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

other forms of trichotomy teaching on the basis of its pneumocentrism. And therefore, my contextualisation must identify sources of particularly pneumocentric trichotomy as opposed to more general spirit, soul, body schema.

As we have seen, secondary sources suggest Kenyon and Hagin were the originators of WoF's particular take on trichotomy.¹⁷ However, the existence of sources earlier than 1940s Pentecostalism in general and Watchman Nee specifically with demonstrable connections to either Kenyon or Hagin contradicts the conclusions of the secondary literature that WoF trichotomy teaching originated in or around the 1940s.

The Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature entry on trichotomy calls trichotomy the 'apostolic' understanding of the human constitution. The *Cyclopedia* entry bases its view on 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and advances an internal hierarchy privileging the spirit, making it an early example of pneumocentrism.¹⁸ Furthermore, the entry's authors, Strong and McClintock, suggest trichotomy was common in the early church until the Apollinarian controversy. Later in history, Strong and McClintock report, the same kind of trichotomy was revived by Luther, challenged by Calvin and other reformers who favoured dichotomous readings, but was current again among Lutherans in the 1880s. Strong and McClintock were writing 60 years before Kenyon.¹⁹ Because proto-WoF trichotomy was being taught in encyclopaedias six decades before Kenyon, it is possible a similar kind of trichotomy teaching continued in the interim and such sources could have been the

¹⁷ McConnell, *The Promise*, 119.

¹⁸ James Strong and John McClintock, "Trichotomy," in *The Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, ed. James and McClintock Strong, John (1881). *The Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* was contemporary to Kenyon and was cited in Assemblies of God educator and Hagin source P. C. Nelson. See P. C. Nelson, *Word Studies in Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin* (Enid, Oklahoma: Southwestern Press, 1941), 76.

¹⁹ Strong and McClintock, "Trichotomy.": "(Trichotomy) was held by Luther, as it still is by the more evangelical part of the Lutheran Church. The Reformers, however, did not consider spirit and soul as different substances, but only as different attributes or operations of the same spiritual essence." This quote provides a clear example of how, contra Churchouse, trichotomy was more than just a marginal understanding before 1940s Pentecostal Christianity.

inspiration for Kenyon and other pre-WoF influences. With that in mind, what other evidence is there of non-Kenyon and Hagin-originated proto-WoF trichotomy teaching?

The work of James Stalker appears to represent the earliest and most explicitly theological source material inspiring WoF trichotomy. The existence of such a source in a historical period concurrent with the *Cyclopedia*, is perhaps surprising in light of the view of many secondary sources that Kenyon and Hagin's theology originated in the late nineteenth century New England metaphysical or New Thought sects.²⁰ Nevertheless, some of the most explicit trichotomy-related theology can indeed be found in the work of mid- to late-nineteenth century Scottish Presbyterian theologian James Stalker (1848-1927).

Stalker's *The Life of Saint Paul* includes a chapter on 'His Gospel', which clearly expounds what is later condensed in consciously WoF sources.²¹ The passage opens by supporting the most basic understanding of trichotomous anthropology – that a human being is threefold in make-up and 'normally consists of three sections – body, soul, and spirit'.²² As the passage continues, Stalker is explicit in his support for the view that, in the prelapsarian state, humankind's three constituent sections 'occupied definite relations of superiority and subordination to one another' and therefore that trichotomy is hierarchical. Again, the repeated use of emphatic language such as 'definite', 'superiority' and 'subordination' means Stalker must have believed that such a hierarchy within the trichotomy should be taken to be the normative understanding of human anthropology. Because Stalker specifies that the human spirit was 'supreme' before the Fall, he thereby initiates the kind of internal hierarchy

²⁰ See Literature Review.

²¹ James Stalker, *The Life of Saint Paul* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1884), 53-54.

²² Ibid., 53. It is more logical to read "normally" as a nineteenth century way of rendering "normative", as opposed to the 21st century way of reading "normally" as "in general", because Stalker's quote is taken from his description of "the nature of man". And because Stalker is referring to the nature of humankind, it is quite illogical to suggest that he does not mean that human beings are generally created in a particular way. Since Stalker is offering his understanding the human constitution in this passage, we must understand it as meaning that he believes his reading of trichotomy is normative as opposed to illustrative or metaphorical or as one of a range of possible readings.

we later see in Kenyon and the WoF trichotomy dictum and lays foundations for pneumocentrism.²³

Stalker also states that the ‘supreme’ human spirit had a ‘definite relation...of superiority’ to the soul and body, with ‘the body undermost’. As a result, the language of supremacy serves to reduce the value of the body and soul by referring to them as ‘these two inferior sections of human nature’. Such language also counters the original goodness of the soul and body in humanity’s prelapsarian state.

Furthermore, Stalker connects trichotomy to hamartiology and soteriology when he states: ‘all sin consists in the usurpation by the body or the soul of the place of the spirit’, language which is echoed later in Kenyon.²⁴ From there, Stalker surmises that, taken together, the body and the soul constitute what Paul referred to as the flesh – a view Stalker explicitly articulates 20 years later in *Christian Psychology*.²⁵

Redemption, according to Stalker, is enacted when ‘Christ restores the lost predominance of the spirit of man’, which is achieved by ‘taking possession of it by His own Spirit’.²⁶ If ‘all sin consists in the usurpation by the body or the soul of the place of the spirit’ and thus the fall, the corollary is that correctly reordering the trichotomy results in salvation. While Stalker’s work is described as an articulation of Pauline theology, such a view is difficult to reconcile with Paul’s suggestions that believers are new creations rather than just correctly arranged humans.²⁷

What Stalker refers to when he says ‘spirit’ is signified by the particularly theologically significant capitalisation scheme he deploys. First, he uses a lower-case ‘s’ to

²³ Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, 56. “The Hidden Man of the Heart” in *Advanced Bible Course*.

²⁴ Kenyon’s particular usage of the language of dethroning, which is employed in four separate but similar sentences in this one short book, is particularly noteworthy and could indicate that Stalker was its source – “sin dethroned the spirit and crowned the intellect; but grace is restoring the spirit to its place of dominion”, *The Wonderful Name of Jesus*, 25.

²⁵ James Stalker, *Christian Psychology* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), 4.

²⁶ *The Life of Saint Paul*, 54.

²⁷ 2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 6:8. 2 Timothy 2:11.

refer to the human spirit which, according to Stalker, is both ‘the side of man which looks towards God and eternity’ and also ‘supreme’ within the anthropological constitution.²⁸ In the case of the born again Christian, ‘Christ’s Spirit’, Stalker concludes, ‘dwells in the human spirit’.²⁹ In other words, according to Stalker, human beings were primarily created as a spirit, but the primacy of that spirit was dethroned by the human’s errant soul (and/or body) in the fall and can only be restored by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within a reborn human spirit which Christ has repossessed ‘by His own Spirit’.³⁰ This goes some way to addressing the observed problems inherent in Stalker’s advocacy of reordering the trichotomy being akin to salvation because it clarifies that such a change takes place by Christ’s Spirit rather than simply by the will of the individual. However, it does not address issues of incompatibility with Paul’s new creation motif.

Another observation raised by Stalker’s capitalisation scheme relating to the human spirit and the Holy Spirit should be noted. If the incarnate Christ is fully human according to Stalker’s definition of the human constitution, Christ must consist of spirit, soul and body. If Christ is also fully God, and if God is triune in accordance with the Apostles and Nicene creeds, then God must simultaneously exist in two three-dimensional or three-fold states - namely spirit, soul and body (Christ) *and* Father, Son and Holy Spirit (God). Applied to Christ’s human constitution, Stalker’s trichotomy means Christ must have both an unfallen human spirit and the Holy Spirit – thereby espousing Spirit Christology. Furthermore, since Stalker teaches that Christians are born again when Christ repossesses their spirits ‘by His own Spirit’, and since Christians are filled with the Holy Spirit,³¹ Stalker’s anthropology must reflect his Christology and vice versa. This reasoning also suggests a new-creation

²⁸ Stalker, *The Life of Saint Paul*, 53.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ As in Ephesians 5:18 and other Scriptures such as Acts 11:24, which specifically refer to the Holy Spirit dwelling in believers as opposed to reborn human spirit.

Christian is in fact a kind of four-dimensional being, with the human spirit made up of a symbiosis between the regenerated human spirit and the Holy Spirit. Such a belief is not necessarily problematic, but concluding that redeemed humanity is so intimately connected to the Holy Spirit is comparable with the claims of the contemporary WoF dictum espoused by Kenyon and Hagin with which we began.

Stalker does not engage with questions relating to the impact of his emphasis on trichotomy or three-sectioned humanity.³² Neither does Stalker explain the origins of his reading of trichotomy. What we do know is that *The Life of Saint Paul* was distributed by evangelical publishers on both sides of the Atlantic and was advertised at the back of early US editions of A. J. Gordon's *Ministry of Healing*.³³ That is significant because its presence in that publication represents a potential (if distant) historical connection back to contemporary WoF, owing to the regard in which Kenyon held Gordon.³⁴ Gordon is also directly quoted in Kenyon's *Reading the Bible in Light of our Redemption*,³⁵ which means it is possible Kenyon could have directly engaged with Stalker's work although no direct citations have been found.

Stalker's use of 'legal' and 'vital' language to represent the spiritual and experiential realities of the various facets of his teaching is strikingly similar to Kenyon's usage and potentially indicative of proto-WoF concepts of faith and sensory denial.³⁶ Lie suggests Kenyon picked up his version of that language from an article in Gordon's *Watchword and*

³² Indeed, Stalker doesn't critically evaluate his own thesis in general. Apart from briefly referencing Heard's *The Tripartite Nature of Man* and Laidlaw's *The Bible Doctrine of Man*, Stalker, *The Life of Saint Paul*, 142.

³³ A. J. Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing, or, Miracles of Cure in All Ages*, 3rd ed. (New York: Fleming H Revell, 1882), 254.

³⁴ See Geir Lie, *E. W. Kenyon: Cult Founder or Evangelical Minister?* (Oslo: Refleks, 2003), 17. Cf. Joe McIntyre, *E. W. Kenyon and His Message of Faith: The True Story* (Creation House, 1997).

³⁵ See Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, 146, 80. and *The Bible in the Light of Our Redemption: Basic Bible Course* (Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1943), 251, 73. Cf. McIntyre, *E. W. Kenyon and His Message of Faith*, 36.

³⁶ See also Stalker's "In Christ" unpublished sermon notes on Ephesians 1.

Truth magazine written by Canadian Robert Cameron.³⁷ With Stalker preceding Cameron's article by more than a decade, Stalker could have been the source for Cameron and/or Gordon and therefore the language Kenyon subsequently used.

Stalker's work has also been inspirational to more contemporary WoF sources.³⁸ For example, Mark Hankins' *Paul's System of Truth* attempts to systematise WoF's trichotomy into what he calls 'the Pneuma concept' – the belief that human beings are essentially and primarily spirit. Hankins supports his thesis by quoting New Testament passages referring to the spirit from a wide range of English translations in terms very evocative of Kenyon as well as reprinting the above-quoted passage written by Stalker verbatim.³⁹ The work of Stalker therefore provides an important example of trichotomy teaching 60 years earlier than the secondary literature suggested and prior to both Kenyon and Hagin. While it has not been possible to demonstrate a direct historical link between Stalker and Kenyon, it is probable that Stalker's work was accessible to Kenyon which means Stalker may have been an inspiration to Kenyon and those that influenced him such as A. J. Gordon. Whether or not Kenyon was aware of and influenced by Stalker directly, later generations of WoF have identified Stalker's work not only as compatible with their teaching but as offering 'a keen insight' into it.⁴⁰ Indeed, the relative strength of historical lineage aside, Stalker's articulation of trichotomy is so strikingly similar in theological terms to the 'I am a spirit, I possess a soul

³⁷ Lie, E. W. *Kenyon: Cult Founder or Evangelical Minister?*, 76n126.

³⁸ See Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 39. Jeanne Orrison, "Building Your Library," *Connections* 2006, 14. Rhema Bible Training Centre's New Testament Survey instructor, Jeanne Morrison describes Stalker's *The Life of Saint Paul* in effusive terms: "This book impacted my life as a teacher. It's a classic – absolutely superb. No one could say it better!"

Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 39. Interestingly, Mark Hankins' father, B. B. Hankins (at the time, pastor of The Christian Center, in West Columbia) entered WoF after a US missionary to Mexico visited his church in 1954 and introduced Hankins Snr. to Kenyon's books. The same contact subsequently connected Hankins Snr. with Hagin, with Hagin subsequently visiting Hankins Snr's church four years later. Lie, E. W. *Kenyon: Cult Founder or Evangelical Minister?*, 145n62. B. B. Hankins subsequently ministered in connection with the likes of John Osteen and Kenneth Hagin for roughly 50 years and the extended Hankins family are now influential within contemporary WoF. B. B. Hankins, *Success in Ministry: Lessons from a Spiritual Father* (Bloomington: WestBow Press, 2016).

⁴⁰ Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 39.

and I live in a body' dictum, we must make theological comparisons with Stalker's theology even if historical connections with earlier WoF sources could be demonstrated further.

Stalker's assumption that there is a hierarchy within the human constitution must also conclude that the soul and the body were less 'very good' than the human spirit in the prelapsarian state of Genesis 1:31. The danger is that, as a consequence of this and his 'undermost' language, Stalker is advocating that the fall was due to the wrong arrangement of the trichotomy. The same line of reasoning would suggest that the correct alignment of the trichotomy with the human spirit supreme would result in salvation in contradiction with the resurrection and new birth language of the New Testament.

Overall, Stalker's clearest contribution to trichotomy teaching is his hierarchical three-fold anthropology, with the human spirit on-top and the soul, then the body beneath. And in this way, Stalker's teaching represents the kind of pneumocentrism later found in WoF sources. Stalker's trichotomy teaching also serves to establish a connection between anthropology and Christology in the WoF source base because Stalker's view of redeemed humanity incorporates the realignment and repositioning of the fallen human trichotomy by Christ's Spirit and ultimately after the pattern of Christ incarnate.

1.1.2 John Alexander Dowie's Trichotomy

Writing after Stalker's 1884 *The Life of Saint Paul*, another Scots minister emanating from a Reformed church background also espoused trichotomous anthropology – John Alexander Dowie (1847—1907). Both Stalker and Dowie studied theology at New College, Edinburgh at around the same time in the 1870s, but a specific historical connection between the two is illusive.

In Dowie's work the Holy Spirit dwells within the reborn human spirit of the believer. From here, life is said to flow from the human spirit (*pneuma*), through the soul (*psyche*) and

out into the body (*soma*). Dowie even illustrates this as a gold line representing the Holy Spirit running through the three dimensions of the regenerate person.⁴¹ Dowie's location of the Holy Spirit within the human spirit of the believer is therefore directly comparable with Stalker's assertion that 'Christ's Spirit' dwells within the 'human spirit'.⁴² However, Dowie's suggestion that life flows from the human spirit out to the body, with the same vivifying impact in physical terms as Stalker suggested in spiritual terms, is Dowie's innovation.

Dowie's trichotomy theology finds its application in a healing context in some of his earliest writings on the subject: 'the Holy Spirit, through my Spirit my Soul my Body, is the only power that can be effectual either through my lips in preaching, or in my hands in the act of healing.'⁴³ And, like Stalker, Dowie's trichotomy teaching is remarkably similar to Kenyon and Hagin decades later, who not only used similar language but also draw similar conclusions from it.⁴⁴

Dowie differs from Stalker when it comes to hierarchy in the trichotomy. In short, Dowie's internal hierarchy is much more flexible, something that is evident in his adoption of a quite different capitalisation policy. Every reference to a constituent part of the trichotomy is capitalised. Due to Dowie's adoption of the *pneuma*, *psyche*, *soma* scheme of Greek words representing the human constitution, and because the Holy Spirit is also *pneuma* in New Testament Greek, this leads to some confusion as to what *pneuma* refers to when Dowie uses the term. The confusion can perhaps be relieved by Dowie's description of his own illustrative diagram.

The centre circle of the diagram is of *gold* color (the Holy Spirit): the next is *white*

⁴¹ See also: John Alexander Dowie, "Sanctification of Spirit, Soul and Body," *A Voice from Zion* Vol 1., No. 7 (1897).

⁴² Stalker, *The Life of Saint Paul*, 53.

⁴³ Dowie, "Sanctification of Spirit, Soul and Body," 43. Rolvix Harlan, "John Alexander Dowie and the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion" (Chicago, 1906), 150.

⁴⁴ Kenyon, *The Wonderful Name of Jesus*, 107. Kenneth E Hagin, *Faith Bible Study Course* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Faith Library Publications, 1992), 53. "...healing begins in your spirit. It begins on the inside of you and works to the outside".

(man's spirit): the next *blood red* (the soul), and the outer circle *carnation* (the body).

The line running from the central circle to the outer circle is of *gold*, and is used to illustrate the flowing of the Holy spirit through the entire three-fold nature of man, thus sanctifying him wholly, and preserving him entire and without blame.⁴⁵

Dowie's description of his trichotomy diagram helps clarify his belief that the Holy Spirit dwells within the human spirit, but that the work of the Holy Spirit can be made manifest across the human experience. Still, in Dowie's view, the primacy of the human spirit is what separates human beings from animals:

God imparted to man His own spirit and nature. God is 'the Father' of man's spirit. He is the Father of the Spirit but not of the Soul. He is the maker of the Soul and Body but not the father of it. There is a great distinction between maker and father. What I make is external to me. That of which I am father is my procreation... We get our Souls and Bodies by natural generation from our parents, but our Spirits are from God who is the Father of the Spirits of man.⁴⁶

By suggesting that the human spirit is fathered by God, Dowie – like Stalker – elevates the human spirit above the rest of the trichotomy. However, Dowie solely elevates the human spirit as opposed to relegating the soul and the body as Stalker does. As a result, Dowie's trichotomy, while still demonstrating a kind of dualism, is slightly more holistic. In addition, the suggestion that Jesus' soul died is very important to Dowie: 'Christ himself said, "My Soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." Then his Soul died... There is no question about

⁴⁵ Dowie, "Sanctification of Spirit, Soul and Body," 12-13. While this article was published in 1897, the opening pages suggest it is the transcription of an address delivered in 1895 based on material that Dowie said he had been delivering for years.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 22.

it. Christ poured out His Soul unto death.’⁴⁷

Dowie’s adoption of the *pneuma*, *psyche*, *soma* rubric means he interprets *psyche* reasonably consistently as ‘the animal life’.⁴⁸ For him, the death of that kind of life is necessary for the redemption of the human soul and body, but – rather like Stalker – such death is not necessary for the God-breathed spirit. In other words, Dowie taught that Jesus died *soulishly*.

Dowie’s trichotomy is, therefore, similar to Stalker’s trichotomy. Both advance three-dimensional anthropologies with built-in hierarchies and degrees of pneumocentrism. However, while Stalker describes the human spirit as supreme within the trichotomy at the expense of the soul and body, Dowie exalts the role of Holy Spirit within the human spirit without such a denigration of the soul and the body. Furthermore, Dowie points towards a direct connection of his understanding of trichotomy with miraculous healing and overall divine health.

1.1.3 Jessie Penn-Lewis's Trichotomy

Somewhere between Kenyon’s earliest published works in 1898 and his 1937 coining of the trichotomy dictum, Kenyon’s theology evolved from a two-dimensional understanding of the human constitution to a tripartite view.⁴⁹ Earlier (see 1.1.1) we saw how existing evangelical sources such as James Stalker and A. J. Gordon could have provided the context if not the specific inspiration for Kenyon’s transition, but Kenyon biographer Joe McIntyre and Pentecostal theologian William Atkinson suggest Welsh Revival leader Jessie Penn-Lewis is the more likely source, with McIntyre going as far as saying that Kenyon was ‘entranced

⁴⁷ Ibid., 23.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ McIntyre, *E. W. Kenyon and His Message of Faith*, 21. McIntyre cites Kenyon, "Where Do We Live", *Reality*, June 1906, 88 as evidence that Kenyon’s transition to trichotomy was complete by 1906 – a time when the Asuza Street revival was in full flow.

See also: Kenyon, *Advanced Bible Course*.

with' Penn-Lewis' teaching 'for many years'.⁵⁰ Writing in his *Herald of Life* newspaper in 1945, Kenyon situates his fascination with Penn-Lewis some 25 years earlier in the 1920s.⁵¹ However, McIntyre explains that Kenyon grew to believe that Penn-Lewis dwelt too much on the travail of the cross as opposed to the victory of Christ's ascension and throne – which subsequently became Kenyon's focus.⁵²

Penn-Lewis taught that the human spirit is a 'distinct organism' in the human constitution, a view that is explicitly outlined within her and Evan Roberts' spiritual warfare manual *War on the Saints*.⁵³ Penn-Lewis based her three-dimensional anthropology on 1 Thessalonians 5:23, but also other passages in the Pauline epistles which appear to refer to the human spirit as a distinct entity including: 1 Cor 2:11; 1 Cor 5:4; 1 Cor 14:14; 2 Cor 2:13 and Rom 8:16. As a result of her reading of these texts as well as Heb 4:12, Penn-Lewis articulates a hierarchical trichotomy similar to Stalker:

...because through the Fall, the spirit in union with God which once ruled and dominated soul and body, fell from the predominant position into the vessel of the soul and could no longer rule...through the apprehension of the death of the old creation with Christ as set forth in Rom 6:6, is the new spirit liberated, divided from the soul, and joined to the Risen Lord.⁵⁴

While Stalker and Penn-Lewis' narrative of the 'predominant position' of the human spirit before the fall are strikingly similar, Penn-Lewis takes it a step further and suggests the fall resulted in the human spirit falling into the soul. According to Penn-Lewis' line of reasoning,

⁵⁰ McIntyre, *E. W. Kenyon and His Message of Faith*, 21. Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 137.

⁵¹ McIntyre, *E. W. Kenyon and His Message of Faith*, 21.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Jessie Penn-Lewis and Evan Roberts, *War on the Saints: A Text Book for Believers on the Work of Deceiving Spirits among the Children of God* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1912). Jessie Penn-Lewis, *Soul and Spirit: A Glimpse into Bible Psychology in Relation to Sanctification* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1908).

⁵⁴ Penn-Lewis and Roberts, *War on the Saints: A Text Book for Believers on the Work of Deceiving Spirits among the Children of God*, 109.

unbelieving humans are effectively dichotomies while born-again Christians are trichotomies.

As a result, Penn-Lewis taught that Christians should be led by the (reborn) human ‘spirit’, applying the interpretative lens provided by her trichotomy theology to Romans 8:9: ‘...the word “spirit” is not written with a capital “S” denoting the Spirit of God, but with a lower-case “s” referring to the spirit of man. But the believer can only thus walk “after the spirit,” if the Spirit of God dwells in him...’.⁵⁵ As a result, Penn-Lewis’ trichotomy inevitably shares a theological contention with Stalker: if the lost predominance of the spirit resulted in the fall, the spirit must be less fallen than the soul and the body. Or, to put it another way, the soul and the body must be less ‘very good’ than the spirit.⁵⁶

From here Penn-Lewis went on to teach that demonic possession is primarily the result of varying degrees of spiritual passivity.⁵⁷ But rather than simply using passivity to mean a lack of activity, Penn-Lewis means giving ground to the influence of evil spirits through wrong belief and at the same time remaining inactive in soul and/or spirit.⁵⁸ However, the complexity comes in her examples of how influence might be given to evil spirits – many of which could be read as critiques of Pentecostal and charismatic pneumatic manifestation as well as the influence of evil spirits. Her answer to the problem could be summarised as the active participation of a soul submitted to its reborn and Holy Spirit-led spirit, resulting in transformed outward physical results. And therefore, Penn Lewis’ spiritual warfare teaching is inherently reliant on trichotomy. The strength of her reading is that, although it is a pneumocentric trichotomy approach leaning towards the spirit as the true self, it is also more holistic than the most hierarchical examples of trichotomy such as Stalker. Kenyon advocated that ‘...Man’s body, soul and spirit are Eternal. Man cannot be judged or

⁵⁵ Ibid., 214.

⁵⁶ See Genesis 1:13.

⁵⁷ Especially in *War on the Saints*.

⁵⁸ Penn-Lewis and Roberts, *War on the Saints: A Text Book for Believers on the Work of Deceiving Spirits among the Children of God*. This view is articulated throughout, but especially in chapter 9.

crowned in Eternity without his body. Man was never designed to be a disembodied spirit. Man is not...completely a man without his body'.⁵⁹ And therefore, Penn-Lewis' trichotomy is relatively consistent with Kenyon's quasi-holistic trichotomy. From here, Penn-Lewis' trichotomous understanding developed into a pioneering understanding of authoritative prayer, specifically concepts of 'binding and loosing', which are elsewhere referred to as notions of commanding faith. For his part, Kenyon appears to have followed the same trajectory, which could well have happened under the influence of Penn-Lewis.⁶⁰

In summary, Penn-Lewis's trichotomy is broadly comparable with Stalker's. However, her description of the fall as equating to the human spirit collapsing into the soul and her resultant belief that demonic possession is a consequence of spiritual passivity are her own innovations. Penn-Lewis' solution to the collapse of the trichotomy is also similar to Stalker's in that it advocates the re-positioning of the human spirit as supreme in the trichotomy. However, Penn-Lewis' view is also both more detailed and more nuanced in its description of the process of re-positioning. Penn-Lewis' development of her trichotomous thought into an understanding of authoritative prayer is indicative of later faith teaching and is also a unique contribution to the broader discussion of WoF trichotomy.

By analysing proto-WoF trichotomy teaching in the context of contemporaries and influences, the broad consensus in favour of trichotomy teaching before Kenyon and WoF's popularisation of trichotomy is apparent, but at the same time there is a spectrum of views relating to what trichotomy means within that consensus. Kenyon's contemporaries and influences held to trichotomous views, but what they meant by the terminology varied from a more separate and demonstrably hierarchical understanding of the predominance of the human spirit to more holistic interpretations of the three dimensions of the human

⁵⁹ Lie, E. W. *Kenyon: Cult Founder or Evangelical Minister?* 60.

⁶⁰ Paul L. King, "The Restoration of the Doctrine of Binding and Loosing," *Alliance Academic Review* (1997): n69-72.

constitution.

Kenyon's views initially appear categorical that human beings are spirits, possess souls and live in bodies, but it is apparent that Kenyon also seeks to maintain the integration of the trichotomy between various dimensions of the human constitution.⁶¹ That contrasts with Stalker's clearly hierarchical model, as well as subsequent applications in Kenneth Hagin and Mark Hankins, which make no such attempt to maintain the unity of the whole.

Trichotomous anthropology is demonstrable amongst a range of evangelical sources and especially key contemporaries and influences on Kenyon. There was no overall consensus about how the details of trichotomy should be expressed, but there were a number of trends – such as the tendency towards either tripartite anthropology with a holistic understanding or a more distinctly trichotomous view. Furthermore, there is evidence of flexibility and fluctuations relating to the meaning of trichotomy within Kenyon's own work, which began dichotomous, became trichotomous and at times emphasises the integrated nature of the three parts espoused. Overall, owing to its clear similarities to the work of Stalker and Penn-Lewis, Kenyon's trichotomy remains hierarchical in terms of its emphasis on the predominance of the spirit. And from here, Kenyon takes up Penn-Lewis's emphasis on the primacy of the 'spirit' for discernment and subjective leadership in the life of the believer. That, in turn, is pitted against sensory and intellectual knowledge as inferior comparisons, potentially providing the basis for sensory denial and positive confession. Furthermore, Kenyon's addition of an emphasis on the believer's identification with Christ's ascension and what he termed 'New Creation Realities' over Penn-Lewis' crucicentrism provide the foundation for connections with other WoF facets such as healing and prosperity

⁶¹ Lie, E. W. *Kenyon: Cult Founder or Evangelical Minister?*, 87.

due to its connection with resurrection and ultimately eschatological outcomes.⁶²

Furthermore, such trichotomy teaching generally exhibits a pneumocentric hierarchy, although this is interpreted and applied differently by the different sources. However, there is some degree of consensus since Stalker, Dowie and Penn-Lewis's trichotomy teachings all offer a soteriology that seeks to realign the human constitution along the lines of Christ incarnate. And therefore, they all advance Christian anthropology patterned after their Christology. With Stalker, Dowie and Penn-Lewis positioned as sources of WoF anthropology, further clarification of how trichotomy is understood and applied in WoF is required.

1.2 Theological Analysis of WoF Trichotomy

Owing to the first section's focus on context, analysis of trichotomy's theological function within the WoF system was incomplete. Therefore, the second part of the chapter moves onto a critical evaluation of WoF trichotomy theology as a part of the hypothetical WoF system. It specifically engages with the hypothesis that trichotomy is the entry point into the WoF system and asks whether it is foundational to the system (see 1.2.1).

I selected Robert Bowman's research as a starting point for the theological analysis for two reasons. First, for methodological purposes. As the introduction showed, primary source material relating to WoF is so plentiful that working back from secondary sources then critically evaluating the claims and conclusions of the literature brings greater focus to the research, while also inherently providing the opportunity to engage with primary sources. And second, because Bowman's work offers the most complete articulation of WoF as a theological structure of interconnected beliefs to date.

⁶² Kenyon, *New Creation Realities*. McIntyre suggests Kenyon's emphasis on "identification" originates with A. J. Gordon - McIntyre, *E. W. Kenyon and His Message of Faith*, 201. And the same A. J. Gordon quotation is cited at the start of Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 1.

Once trichotomy's place as an entry point has been assessed and trichotomy's function in relation to the proposed system analysed, the further theological effects of trichotomy teaching are then examined. These include whether trichotomous anthropology specifically lays the foundations for what Kenyon called 'identification' (see 1.2.2).⁶³ Owing to McConnell's suggestion that trichotomy constitutes the basis of WoF's 'identification' or divinisation teaching,⁶⁴ the analysis asks whether trichotomy forms the theological underpinning for the absolutism of WoF's faith teaching (the belief that believers have the faith of God and that it is always God's will to heal and to prosper in proportion to this faith). The analysis also asks whether trichotomy ultimately points in the direction of the JDS doctrine in particular, as Bowman and Atkinson have suggested.⁶⁵

1.2.1 Foundational to a WoF System, an Entry Point or Both?

Robert Bowman's analysis clearly concludes that WoF is both foundationally reliant on trichotomy and that trichotomy is the entry point into an implied WoF system.⁶⁶ Bowman observes that there are 'various places' that represent entry points into WoF. Other scholars approach the subject differently and can therefore be taken as examples of these other 'various places'. Walker, Smail and Wright, centre their WoF critique on what they conclude is the unstable doctrine of 'revelation knowledge',⁶⁷ making such divine insight the titular entry point of their work. McConnell's research, on the other hand, approaches the subject through the prism of 'the promise of health and wealth' and 'a different gospel',⁶⁸ both of which signify the centrality of healing and prosperity doctrine to McConnell's narrative approach. Revelation knowledge and the promise of health and wealth therefore represent

⁶³ Otherwise known as the 'little gods' teaching – WoF's take on divinisation.

⁶⁴ McConnell, *The Promise*, 118-25.

⁶⁵ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 27.

⁶⁶ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 104-05, emphasis added.

⁶⁷ Smail, Walker, and Wright, "Revelation Knowledge."

⁶⁸ See: McConnell, *A Different Gospel. The Promise*.

two other possible entry points. However, Bowman argues that trichotomy ‘stands out’ because it represents WoF’s ‘most basic pre-supposition’.⁶⁹ By arguing that trichotomy is a theological prerequisite for both revelation knowledge and health and wealth, Bowman suggests health, wealth and revelation knowledge flow from trichotomy teaching. And therefore trichotomy is taken as the starting point for this research because by analysing Bowman’s conclusions relating to trichotomy, we can further interrogate the function and structure of WoF.

Bowman’s conclusion that trichotomy is foundational to the structure of WoF is more fully expressed when he rests three concluding outcomes on an ‘only if trichotomy is true’ premise. In other words, Bowman says only if trichotomy is true ‘...can man be said to exist in God’s class’; ‘...can it be claimed that the reasoning of the intellect...and the feelings of the body are unreliable guides’; and ‘...would it make any sense to say that health and wealth come from the spirit realm into material existence through faith...’.⁷⁰ Thus, Bowman implicitly suggests that WoF is a system and that trichotomy is both foundational and an entry point above other entry points. Put another way, Bowman concludes that trichotomy is the theological basis for divinisation and that trichotomy provides the rationale for faith that leads to sensory denial/positive confession and results in material health and wealth outcomes.

Bowman’s only-if phraseology is an evolution of McConnell’s emphasis on his belief that ‘revelation knowledge’ is a critical part of WoF,⁷¹ which leads Bowman to suggest from where he believes WoF’s theological reliance emanates. According to Bowman’s reading, WoF’s dependence on so-called revelation knowledge springs from the movement’s anthropology and specifically its trichotomy teaching. Bowman’s thesis centres on the

⁶⁹ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 2nd Edition, 104-05.

⁷⁰ Ibid. Emphasis added.

⁷¹ McConnell, *The Promise*, 103-14.

exclusive nature of the first word of the phrase ‘*only* if trichotomy is true’.⁷² If we read that across to the context of our general hypothesis that WoF is a system of six interconnected beliefs, it means only if trichotomy is true would the rest of the system stand. Bowman concludes that WoF is exclusively reliant on trichotomy and without trichotomy its theology collapses.

The second point is a question of veracity - ‘Only if trichotomy is *true*’.⁷³ While Bowman does not give details of the epistemological framework within which he is working, this wording does indicate that Bowman assumes there is a single correct theory of human anthropology, which is either monistic, dichotomous or trichotomous and that others are incorrect. Otherwise, Bowman’s assertions that trichotomy must exclusively be ‘true’ for WoF to function are redundant.

Therefore, if both points are accepted, Bowman concludes that WoF is necessarily reliant both on trichotomy as a concept as well as a kind of modernistic binary understanding of this view’s veracity for any WoF system to stand. However, to invert Bowman’s argument, ‘if WoF is not entirely reliant on trichotomy and/or trichotomy is indeed ‘true’, it stands. At least, we should not automatically assume that the whole network of interconnected beliefs is unsupportable. Indeed, Bowman begins to make a similar concession himself but stops short of referring to the apparent WoF system as ‘true’ under such circumstances. Rather, he suggests that finding trichotomy to be ‘true’ would ‘leave the matter open.’⁷⁴

Since Bowman’s thesis can be summarised as ‘only if trichotomy is true, can WoF stand’, his suggestion that trichotomy is required in order for the ‘The reasoning of the intellect’ and ‘the feelings’ to be seen as ‘unreliable guides’ must also be considered. An important observation about this part of Bowman’s conclusion is that the reasoning of the

⁷² Emphasis added.

⁷³ Emphasis added.

⁷⁴ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 2nd Edition, 105.

intellect (and human feelings) must be seen as unreliable in order for a WoF theological system to stand. In other words, while it is not stated this way, Bowman is effectively saying that WoF theology is reliant on concluding that the reasoning of the intellect and feelings as unreliable as opposed to being completely reliant on trichotomy per se.⁷⁵ And thus trichotomy is better seen as the method by which WoF theology undermines intellectual and sensual reliability, something that is achieved by adherence to the kind of the superiority of the human spirit teaching identified above.

Bowman's conclusion that any WoF system is foundationally reliant on trichotomy should be questioned on the basis that, if another argument for believing the reasoning of the intellect is either unreliable or incomplete is advanced, then such a system can function without being wholly reliant on trichotomy. Furthermore, should other explanations of trichotomy's veracity be advanced – for example that it is one of a number of acceptable and biblical articulations of the anthropological constitution found in Scripture as opposed to the binary options of true or false – then any WoF system attached to trichotomy remains intact.

This means, trichotomy's *veracity* as a model for anthropology does not need to be tested for the sufficiency of intellectual reasoning to be questioned. What is required is either an alternative explanation for sensory denial or an alternative justification for trichotomy's veracity or, indeed, both. And therefore, trichotomy can be described as an important feature and *an* entry point, but not – at this stage – absolutely foundational and it is possible that it is not the only entry point into the hypothetical WoF system.

If trichotomy is rejected or if its status as an essential truth is reframed as one perspective amongst a number of possible perspectives, another method of attaining the necessary 'faith idealism', to use De Arteaga's words, to sustain a WoF system is required. The aforementioned concept of revelation knowledge is one option. WoF's 'Faith' or 'the

⁷⁵ Ibid., 109.

integrity of God's word' doctrines (WoF's own particular kind of inerrancy teaching, which appears itself to be intrinsically linked to 'faith' teaching) provide another.⁷⁶ WoF's particularly radical atonement healing beliefs also represent a possible candidate for filling the gap.⁷⁷

Therefore, since trichotomy provides momentum towards other WoF features and since there are strong arguments in favour of the other features' reliance on trichotomy, trichotomy can be described at least as foundational. As other entry points (such as the integrity of God's word and WoF's atonement beliefs) have been suggested, Bowman's conclusions appear too exclusive. In other words, it may be true to say that trichotomy is *an* entry point, but it remains to be seen whether or not trichotomy can be seen as *the* absolute and exclusive entry point.

1.2.2 Trichotomy as an Entry Point

However, while that argument establishes trichotomy's status as an entry point, it does not explain how trichotomy functions as a gateway pointing towards five other theological features. Since trichotomy is at least *an* entry point into the potential system, and since the contextualisation found that pre-Kenyon trichotomy teaching exhibited a pneumocentric hierarchy, this section examines WoF trichotomy's role in providing momentum towards the other five features.

Bowman's group of three conclusions about trichotomy provide a number of indications of how this entry point feature could lead onto faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS. Bowman says: only if trichotomy is true '...can man be said to exist in God's class' – which raises questions relating to WoF soteriology and divinisation; '...can it

⁷⁶ Hagin, *Faith Bible Study Course*, 117.

⁷⁷ For now, however, our focus is on trichotomy and its theological function in relation to the other features.

be claimed that the reasoning of the intellect...and the feelings of the body are unreliable guides’ – which suggests trichotomy is specifically foundational to revelation knowledge, what are known as ‘rhema’ words, as well as sensory denial and positive confession; and ‘...would it make any sense to say that health and wealth come from the spirit realm into material existence through faith...’ – which raises questions about what WoF teaching means by faith and how trichotomy relates to such a realised soteriology and how this in turn connects to health, wealth and prosperity. By grouping his conclusions in that way, we can see that Bowman is effectively describing trichotomy’s theological function as establishing grounds and a method for divinisation in order to supersede human intellect and feelings, resulting in material manifestations of healing and prosperity.

Continuing that rationale, adherence to the kind of trichotomy teaching espoused by Stalker and subsequently re-purposed in Kenyon, Hagin and later Hankins serves three functions in WoF. First, it creates a pneumocentric anthropology and along with it the necessary context for a soteriology that moves towards divinisation. Second, based on that pneumocentrism, WoF trichotomy offers a rationale for sensory denial and its verbal corollary positive confession due to the prioritisation of (human) spirit-based belief over reason and feeling. And third, pneumocentric trichotomy generates an expectancy for the material manifestation of healing and provision based on the divinisation mediated through sensory denial and positive confession. In doing so, having provided an entry point into the system, trichotomy also provides momentum towards other WoF features.

And therefore, the following analysis of the function of trichotomy begins by analysing the basis for WoF pneumocentric trichotomy (see 1.2.2.1), before focusing on how pneumocentric trichotomy results in a rationale for divinisation (see 1.2.2.2). The section concludes by analysing how trichotomy provides momentum towards other WoF features, specifically sensory denial, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS.

1.2.2.1 The Basis of Pneumocentric Trichotomy

Owing to the hierarchical nature of trichotomy teaching as well as the prioritisation of the human spirit in the ‘I am a spirit’ dictum, WoF trichotomy teaches that humans are ontologically a spirit. In addition to 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:14, Scriptures such as James 2:26 are deployed in order to establish that the spirit referred to in trichotomy, the human spirit, is ‘the real you’.⁷⁸ The implication is that the body and soul-associated senses are not the real you. As a result, one consequence of trichotomy teaching is to make human experience and attainment of truth a pneumocentric endeavour. Because WoF teaching places rational truth within the ontological domain of the spirit and because the soul and body are seen as inferior to the spirit (see 1.1.1), truth is presented to be exclusively accessible via the human spirit and thus the human spirit and soul are separated into distinctly ontological and rational realms. This view serves to make truth impervious to temporal circumstances, which propels the theological framework towards concepts of positive confession and sensory denial as they pertain to the miraculous especially healing and financial provision on the basis that they are already spiritual realities. However, the view that truth is exclusively accessible by the human spirit, is inherently problematic on at least two fronts. It does not account for the human spirit’s interaction with and integration within the human whole. Neither does it address how the human spirit could express or articulate spiritual experiences without the soul and body, and thus it overlooks necessary questions relating to mediation.⁷⁹ Therefore, WoF trichotomy is heavily reliant on notions of a recreated human spirit within a

⁷⁸ Wommack, *Spirit, Soul & Body*, 11. See also: Hagin, *Man on Three Dimensions*, 9-10. Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 36.

⁷⁹ “But the question could be raised: In what sense is the Spirit ever experienced directly at all? Even a “direct” voice from heaven would be mediated in some sense via sound waves and eardrums, and an “inner” voice is processed via the brain.” However, it is worth noting that in the note associated with this sentence (n7), Cartledge qualifies his view thus: “I realize that, strictly speaking, no “third party” is involved unless one is tempted to use some form of segregated approach to theological anthropology (e.g., mind, body, spirit)”. “The Mediation of the Holy Spirit” in Mark K. Cartledge, *Mediations of the Spirit: Interventions in Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2015).

trichotomous anthropology, but as it stands that framework fails to address questions of mediation. In order to better address these problems, trichotomy theology must go beyond reductionist ideas of ‘rigidly pneumocentric’ trichotomy.⁸⁰ However, without such a development, the WoF framework of interconnected theological features inevitably continues towards concepts of divinisation due to its heavy reliance on such a trichotomy.

1.2.2.2 Pneumocentric Trichotomy and Divinisation

WoF’s emphasis on the primacy of the human spirit or pneumocentrism emanates from its particular interpretation and application of New Testament anthropological terms, a reading that results in momentum towards a kind of divinisation. This sub-section analyses the connections between WoF’s pneumocentric trichotomy and divinisation. Because WoF theology presents itself as inherently biblically grounded, particular attention is paid to the handling of biblical terms relating to trichotomy.

While English Bible translations commonly use the words spirit, soul and body as renderings of the Greek New Testament terms *pneuma*, *psyche* and *soma* respectively, contemporary WoF teachers generally rely on the English language terms when referring to the human constitution.⁸¹ For them, spirit, soul and body become a lens through which to read New Testament and especially Pauline theology. Usage of spirit, soul and body largely follows the kind of rubric set out by Stalker, Dowie and others in the first part of this chapter.⁸² However, things are less clear when it comes to the other anthropological terms used in the New Testament because WoF writing pays little if any attention to *nous* (the mind), *noema* (also the mind), *dianonia* (the mind, specifically the intellectual faculties), *sarx*

⁸⁰ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 27.

⁸¹ Wommack, *Spirit, Soul & Body*, 1, 10. Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 45-50.

⁸² That is, that spirit = *pneuma*; soul = *psyche*; body = *soma*, (see 1.1).

(the flesh), *cardia* (the heart), and *splagchna* (the heart or ‘bowels of compassion’).⁸³ And therefore ‘flesh’ is read negatively as being the unrenewed soul-body combination as opposed to the physically material body; and the mind, will and emotions are read as directly equating to *psyche* rendered as soul.⁸⁴

The boundaries are blurred further still when it comes to the ‘heart’. Hagin, for example, teaches that: ‘The words “heart” and “spirit” are used interchangeably in the Scriptures. Your heart is your spirit. When the Word of God speaks about the heart of man, it is speaking of the spirit of of (sic) man.’⁸⁵ However, Hagin’s contention that heart and spirit are simply interchangeable is undermined by far more complex and nuanced biblical usage of these terms than synonymy allows. First, Hagin makes no distinctions between the usage of Old Testament and New Testament languages, which end up being rendered ‘heart’ and ‘spirit’ in English translations despite being sourced from different Hebrew and Greek words respectively. Furthermore, because ‘heart’, ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’ are the English renderings of more than one Greek word each, it is more difficult to conclude the presence of an absolute theological anthropology that initial readings of passages like 1 Thessalonians 5:23 may suggest. Taking the New Testament as an example, at least two different words are rendered as ‘heart’ including *kardia* and *splagchna*. And, on a few occasions *psyche* is rendered as ‘heart’ or ‘heartily’ and more often ‘life’.⁸⁶ Therefore, we cannot simplistically read every instance of *psyche* as ‘soul’, meaning mind, will and emotions. Neither can we say that the terms ‘heart’ and ‘spirit’ are synonymous.⁸⁷

⁸³ “Bowels of compassion” comes from the King James Version’s rendering of 1 John 3:17.

⁸⁴ Hankins, *Paul’s System of Truth*, 47.

⁸⁵ Hagin, *Man on Three Dimensions*, 9. While Hagin propagated this teaching, like numerous other examples, it originates with Kenyon – see E. W. Kenyon, *The Two Kinds of Faith: Faith’s Secrets Revealed* (Seattle: Kenyon’s Gospel Publishing Society, 1942), 66. This teaching is further echoed by Hankins, *Paul’s System of Truth*, 54.

⁸⁶ Heart: Acts 14:22 (AMP), Eph 6:6, Col 3:23. Life: Matt 2:20, Luk 12:22-23, Acts 20:10, Rev 8:9.

⁸⁷ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 108. Bowman makes a similar point highlighting how, contra Hagin, Paul appears to use “spirit” and “mind” synonymously.

WoF's over-confidence about what is being referred to in Scripture when words like spirit, soul and body are used in English translations gives the appearance of a more definitive, inflexible and frequently articulated New Testament biblical anthropology than is found in Scripture. Furthermore, these linguistic concerns result in theological implications for WoF trichotomy. One of the clearest examples is the ambiguity in WoF theology when it comes to distinguishing between *Pneuma* (the Holy Spirit) and *pneuma* (the human spirit) in WoF readings of the Bible.⁸⁸

According to Mark Hankins, 'God is Father Pneuma; He made people to be little pneumas' despite there being no such capitalisation of *pneuma* in the original Greek.⁸⁹ Capitalisation schema used in English translations of the Bible appear as the primary method of differentiating usage of the two *pneumas* when there is no specific qualifying context, but that is not explicitly articulated in WoF sources and there are also some examples of inconsistencies.⁹⁰ One example is Hankins' suggestion that believers are led by their human spirits with Galatians 5:25 given as the supporting text.⁹¹ The problem is that virtually every English translation capitalises 'Spirit' in this passage in order to suggest that the *pneuma* referred to in the original manuscripts is the Holy Spirit.⁹² Even Hankins uses lower-case

⁸⁸ Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 35.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 54-56.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁹² Of the 61 English translations surveyed, 56 translate *pneuma* as "Spirit" with a capital "S" denoting its reference to the Holy Spirit. The five exceptions are: the 2017 Evangelical Heritage Version, which reads "If we live by the spirit, let us also walk in step with it" and only mentions "spirit" once with a lower-case "s"; the God's Word and Names of God translations render the passage identically as "If we live by our spiritual nature, then our lives need to conform to our spiritual nature", again using a lower-case "s"; the New Testament for Everyone translates the text thus "If we live by the spirit, let's line up with the spirit"; while the Worldwide English Version does not mention the spirit at all "We must not be proud of ourselves. We must not make one another angry. We must not want what other people have."

The complete list of translations surveyed is: 21st Century King James Version (KJ21); American Standard Version (ASV); Amplified Bible (AMP) Amplified Bible, Classic Edition (AMPC); BRG Bible (BRG); Christian Standard Bible (CSB); Common English Bible (CEB); Complete Jewish Bible (CJB); Contemporary English Version (CEV); Darby Translation (DARBY); Disciples' Literal New Testament (DLNT); Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition (DRA); Easy-to-Read Version (ERV); Evangelical Heritage Version (EHV); English Standard Version (ESV); English Standard Version Anglicised (ESVUK); Expanded

pneuma in the surrounding verses (Galatians 5:16, 18 and 22), but not verse 25.⁹³

Hankins is unlikely to be the source of that view since Kenneth Hagin was explicit in his view that the capitalisation of most English translations wrongly attributes the Galatians fruit of the Spirit to the Holy Spirit three decades earlier: ‘Love is the first fruit of the human spirit when you are born-again. It’s not the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The translators were entirely wrong in putting a capital “S” in Galatians 5:22. It refers to the human spirit.’⁹⁴

Hagin offers no exegetical support for that conclusion.

The same understanding is evident in other WoF teaching on being led by the spirit based on Galatians 5:16.⁹⁵ As we have seen, capitalisation in most English translations would suggest this verse refers to God the Holy Spirit. However, in practice, WoF teaching is [heavily reliant on Christians being led by their born-again human spirit due to the understanding that they are led by the Holy Spirit via their human spirit. That line of reasoning culminates in teaching such as Hagin’s, which concludes: ‘If by “me” you mean the flesh, of course you cannot always obey the flesh. But if by “me” you mean the inward man, the real you, then it is all right to obey the inward man. Go ahead and do what he wants

Bible (EXB); 1599 Geneva Bible (GNV); GOD’S WORD Translation (GW); Good News Translation (GNT); Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB); International Children’s Bible (ICB); International Standard Version (ISV); J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS); Jubilee Bible 2000 (JUB); King James Version (KJV); Authorized (King James) Version (AKJV); Lexham English Bible (LEB); Living Bible (TLB); The Message (MSG); Modern English Version (MEV); Modern King James Version (MKJV); Mounce Reverse-Interlinear New Testament (MOUNCE); Names of God Bible (NOG); New American Bible (Revised Edition) (NABRE); New American Standard Bible (NASB); New Century Version (NCV); New English Translation (NET Bible); New International Reader’s Version (NIRV); New International Version (NIV); New International Version - UK (NIVUK); New King James Version (NKJV); New Life Version (NLV); New Living Translation (NLT); New Matthew Bible (NMB); New Revised Standard Version (NRSV); New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA); New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised Catholic Edition (NRSVACE); New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE); New Testament for Everyone (NTE); Orthodox Jewish Bible (OJB); The Passion Translation (TPT); Revised Geneva Translation (RGT); Revised Standard Version (RSV); Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE); Tree of Life Version (TLV); The Voice (VOICE); Worrell New Testament (WAS); World English Bible (WEB); Worldwide English (New Testament) (WE); Wycliffe Bible (WYC); Young’s Literal Translation (YLT).

⁹³ Hankins, *Paul’s System of Truth*, 55.

⁹⁴ Kenneth E Hagin, *Growing up, Spiritually*, 11th printing (1996) ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1976), 153.

⁹⁵ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 109. Bowman draws a similar conclusion.

you to do',⁹⁶ which is akin to being led by the human spirit in practice.

Another problem is that, rather than distinguishing between spirit, soul and body – as trichotomy ostensibly sets out to do – by reading 'heart' as referring to the soul or emotions, Hagin's synonymity thesis actually pushes soul and spirit closer together. Indeed, other Hagin-connected WoF sources echo that analysis, with Mark Hankins saying: 'the soul and the spirit are so close together you can hardly tell them apart'.⁹⁷ However, one of Hankins's sources suggests differentiation between the human spirit and the human soul based on his own translation of 1Thessalonians 5:23: 'May your immortal spirit, your mortal nature, your very body...'⁹⁸

Hagin's thesis is similarly problematic when it comes to New Testament renderings of 'heart' and 'spirit' because two different words are used for heart (*kardia* and *splachgna*) and at times 'soul' (*psyche*) is used to denote the eternal essence of humanity.⁹⁹ 1 John 3:16-22 offers a specific example of 'heart' being used to translate both *kardia* and *splachgna*. It is not clear which one Hagin refers to as the human spirit, but owing to its more frequent usage in the New Testament it is likely to be *kardia*. The hypothetical synonymity of 'heart' and 'spirit' in this passage is especially theologically problematic for WoF trichotomy because of the teaching that it is the human spirit that has been born again in salvation and yet John says believers can 'reassure our hearts' and offers advice for 'whenever our hearts condemn us',¹⁰⁰ which is much more compatible with notions of conscience rather than the restored human spirit. And therefore, the theological problem for Hagin's synonymity thesis in this passage is one of conscience. The conscience may be the voice of the spirit mediated by the soul, but it

⁹⁶ Kenneth E. Hagin, *How You Can Be Led by the Spirit of God*, Second edition, tenth printing ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1995), 93.

⁹⁷ Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 43.

⁹⁸ Arthur S. Way, *The Letters of St. Paul to the Seven Churches and Three Friends with the Letter to the Hebrews* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1901), 12. For his part, Hankins cited the sixth edition published in 1926. See: Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 250.

⁹⁹ Matthew 10:28, 16:26; Mark 8:36-37; Luke 12:20; Acts 2:27; James 5:20.

¹⁰⁰ 1 John 3:19-20.

could also be the voice of soul mediated by the soul. So, if the reassuring and condemning of hearts is the function of one's conscience, and if such functions are primarily psychological, they are best placed within the soul as opposed to the spirit within the trichotomous framework.

Therefore, New Testament usage of 'heart' and 'spirit' points to the unavoidable conclusion that – contra Hagin – these terms are not synonymous and biblical usage suggests they are not interchangeable either. However, if 'heart' (*kardia* or *splachgna*) and 'spirit' (*pneuma*) are taken to be distinct as opposed to interchangeable or synonymous terms, they remain compatible with the concept of trichotomy, with the two functioning as soul and spirit respectively. As a result, we are left with the more surprising observation that contradicting Hagin's thesis actually helps support trichotomous approaches because a more distinct dimension of spirit could help illuminate the heart and – if we take heart to be broadly interchangeable with soul or the intersection between soul and spirit – the spirit can illuminate the heart. Such a modification lays the groundwork for a WoF-esque New Testament trichotomy based on a modified version of Hagin's reading of Proverbs 20:27 that avoids the logical flaws of Hagin's interpretation. In other words, while Hagin's argument that the heart and the human spirit are synonymous in Scripture cannot be sustained, seeing the heart as the intersection between the spirit and the soul addresses some of the problems identified within WoF's trichotomous anthropology without dispatching with the trichotomy rubric as a whole.

Since WoF's largely hierarchical trichotomy prioritises the human spirit in its anthropology, and because it emphasises the immanence of the Holy Spirit in some way within the human spirit, the pneumocentrism inherent in WoF trichotomy tends towards a kind of divinisation. While not articulated in those terms, a divinisation-like emphasis is evident in WoF teaching such as Hagin's conclusion to a chapter on discernment between the

subjective leadings of ‘My spirit, the flesh and the Holy Spirit’ in *How you can be led by the Spirit of God*:

We are born of God. Then we feed on the Word of God. By so doing we are partakers of the divine nature, God’s nature. If we have the divine nature in us, our spirit will not tell us to do something wrong. *Whatever your spirit tells you will be right.*¹⁰¹

This quote helpfully isolates some further examples of how trichotomy functions in relation to other WoF features, in this case pushing towards concepts of divinisation and what is known as ‘revelation knowledge’.¹⁰² It also highlights the connection between trichotomy and WoF soteriology when Hagin draws lines between being ‘born of God’ and having ‘the divine nature in us’; and between feeding ‘on the Word of God’ and being ‘partakers of the divine nature’.

WoF soteriology is not uniform, but the work of Kenneth Hagin and Andrew Wommack represent two degrees of the spectrum. Both basically believe that the human spirit is saved, the soul is being saved and the body can be healed and will be completely replaced in the *parousia*. Where they differ is in their respective soteriologies of the human spirit. On one end of the spectrum Kenneth Hagin teaches that, while the human spirit has been reborn, it needs to feed on the written word and preaching in order to grow.¹⁰³ Andrew Wommack’s teaching represents the opposite end of the spectrum when he says: ‘One-third of your salvation is already complete! Right now, your spirit is as saved, sanctified, holy, and empowered as it will ever be throughout all eternity.’¹⁰⁴ For Wommack, growth takes place in the soul and specifically the mind as it is renewed to the realities of the completed redemption

¹⁰¹ Hagin, *How You Can Be Led by the Spirit of God*, 95.

¹⁰² Smail, Walker, and Wright, "Revelation Knowledge."

¹⁰³ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Zoe: The God Kind of Life*, Third printing, 1989 ed. (Tulsa: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1981), 5-6.

¹⁰⁴ Wommack, *Spirit, Soul & Body*, 18-19.

of the human spirit. However, the key difference between the two is how they define their anthropology. Both are trichotomous, but Wommack has a higher view of the reborn human spirit and emphasises renewing the soul. Hagin, on the other hand, presents a picture of the human spirit that is much closer to the soul to the extent that, as we have seen, he sees no difference between the heart and the spirit. Ultimately both present a picture of the redeemed growing in a kind of theosis and – in Andrew Wommack’s case, at least – that Christians are already one third of the way there.

Analysing notions of the priority of the human spirit in the proto-WoF sources, Pavel Hejzlar observes that a similar trichotomy-divinisation trait is evident in both Kenyon and Hagin: ‘it is none other than the human spirit who fascinates Kenyon and Hagin the most...Consequently, God’s transcendence or the difference between the Creator and the creature are downplayed. The status of human beings, on the other hand, is elevated to a stunning degree.’¹⁰⁵ Kenyon’s suggestion that Christians are God-men is a particularly clear example: ‘The New Creation is a God-man, born of heaven. He is like the sample, Jesus. He is God's superman.’¹⁰⁶ Hejzlar’s observations implicitly draw a line between the kind of hierarchical trichotomy WoF is party to and the almost Apollinarian soteriology of A. B. Simpson, who emphasized the reception of the divine mind of Christ. The difference between an arguably proto-WoF source such as Simpson and later sources, such as Kenyon and Hagin, is the precision with which Simpson’s beliefs are articulated. Specifically, Simpson provides grounds for differentiating between soul and spirit, without over-emphasizing the separateness of the parts and without undermining the integration of the whole.

Bernie Van De Walle’s papers analysing both the trichotomous anthropology and Apollinarianism of A. B. Simpson therefore provide a helpful reference point for analysing

¹⁰⁵ Hejzlar, *Two Paradigms for Divine Healing*, 171.

¹⁰⁶ E. W. Kenyon, *Two Kinds of Life* (Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Association, 1943), 27.

WoF's pneumocentric trichotomy and tendency towards divinisation. Simpson's understanding of trichotomous anthropology develops pre-WoF trichotomy beyond the basic readings of texts such as 1 Thessalonians 5:23 towards establishing connections between Trinitarian theology, Christology and trichotomy.¹⁰⁷ According to Van de Walle, Simpson's view is that the human spirit is created out of the *ruach* breath of God in Genesis, while the physical body and the animating soul of living beings were made from the created dust. Unlike Stalker, and subsequently Kenyon and Hagin,¹⁰⁸ Simpson therefore gives a rationale for the human spirit having a fundamentally higher nature than the soul and the body in the context of a more malleable image of the *mind* of Christ bestowed within the believer. Kenyon and Hagin's views of the human spirit are, therefore, relatively compatible with a Simpson-esque anthropology, but also distinct because Simpson's views sustain the integrity of tri-dimensional humanity and concepts of divinisation. Read alongside WoF sources, Simpson's approach begins to redress the balance back in favour of tri-dimensional as opposed to tri-partite humanity.

While my theological analysis found that trichotomy may not be the only entry point into the hypothetical WoF system, trichotomy teaching via its belief in a completely reborn spirit provides the platform for something tantamount to the divinisation of the human spirit. This in turn provides a rationale for other WoF features such as 'sensory denial' not to mention the theological basis for WoF notions of 'faith'. Such an exalted view of the redeemed human spirit combined with the priority assigned to the human spirit within the trichotomy points towards the belief in the manifestation of physical healing and material prosperity as a result of the redemption of the human spirit. Citing 2 Corinthians 5:21, Kenyon says: 'It was the Spirit of Christ that was made sin. It is the spirit of man that was

¹⁰⁷ Bernie A. Van Der Walle, "Ecce Homo? The Divine Anthropology of Albert B. Simpson," *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity* 5:1 (2014): 37.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

made righteous with His Righteousness'.¹⁰⁹ And, as a result of WoF's trichotomous anthropology not only implies a connection with the JDS emphasis found in Kenyon, but also the suggestion is that if the fallen human spirit can be redeemed via an action of divine exchange, so can the soul and the body. And yet, for all of his emphasis on the human spirit as a distinct from the soul (defined as the mind, will and emotions), Kenyon blurs the precision of that transactional language in the book's sub-title 'the unveiling of the sub-conscious *mind*' in a similar way to A. B. Simpson.¹¹⁰

Therefore, WoF's rigidly trichotomous readings of Scripture result in inconsistent interpretations of the anthropological applications of the same Scriptures. This, in turn, results in a range of soteriological theories within WoF. What these soteriological theories have in common – based on their trichotomous interpretative lens – is that the redeemed human spirit is seen as so superior to non-Christian human spirits that WoF's trichotomy-coloured soteriology is best described as divinisation. However, due to varying degrees of confusion relating to distinguishing between spirit and soul in WoF sources, WoF anthropology may not be as consistent in its understanding and application of trichotomy as the primary sources suggest.

Because my analysis found that WoF trichotomy is heavily reliant on such a strong elevation of the reborn human spirit within a trichotomous anthropology that it might be called divinisation, trichotomy results in the absolutism necessary for the kind of faith and authority teaching evident in WoF. From here, positive confession and sensory denial represent potential outworkings of such faith, with healing and prosperity obvious material outcomes. In other words, trichotomy can be referred to as an entry point in the WoF network of interconnected beliefs and divinisation as its condensed soteriology. Indeed, from here,

¹⁰⁹ E. W. Kenyon, *The Hidden Man: An Unveiling of the Subconscious Mind*, 1989 ed. (Kenyon's Gospel Publishing, 1955), 65, 83-84.

¹¹⁰ Emphasis added.

connections to other WoF features are suggested. Specifically, faith absolutism issues from the elevated position bestowed on the redeemed human spirit. And from there, access to the other features can potentially be established.

Conclusion

Trichotomy has been a common – albeit varied – feature of WoF teaching since Kenyon and even earlier in proto-WoF form. Bowman’s conclusion that trichotomy must be seen as an absolute truth in order for his view of WoF to stand might overreach, but trichotomy remains an entry point into WoF and can be seen as foundational to any hypothetical system. Also, as we saw in the contextualisation earlier in this chapter, Kenyon’s own writings exhibit a wider variety of anthropological expressions than rigid adherence to a simplistic linear understanding of trichotomy alone allows. As a result, a more nuanced and multi-faceted understanding of trichotomy as one of a number of biblical frameworks explaining the human constitution is more consistent with Kenyon’s writings and therefore one of WoF key sources.

Furthermore, since the contextualisation found a range of beliefs relating to trichotomy and since the theological analysis found a distinct lack of consistency in the interpretation of biblical terms relating to anthropology in WoF, as well as a fluidity in the deployment of anthropological terminology in Kenyon and Hagin, it is beneficial to advance an alternative interpretation of how the language of spirit, soul and body (as well as heart) relates to WoF. Rather than Hagin’s thesis that heart and spirit are synonymous or interchangeable as the eternal and divine communicating part of humanity, the heart could be read as the intersection between the spirit and the soul. Such an approach enables a Kenyon and Hagin-inspired realised soteriology of the human spirit, but also provides for a kind of subjective leadership of the Spirit via the human spirit that – unlike Hagin – takes account of

the inevitably subjective mediation that takes place. By locating this activity in the heart, sincere beliefs regarding promptings and divine leadership do not have to be either discarded as carnal in nature or wholly exalted as God speaking, rather they can be accepted as God's light shining through a human prism, light that should be weighed against Scripture and within the context of believing community.

Stalker's particularly trichotomous anthropology overlooks God's description of humans as 'very good' rather than just human spirits.¹¹¹ Therefore, in Eden the body and soul remain blessed dimensions of the human whole. The issues relating to the consequences of the fall on human anthropology are consequently related to completeness as opposed to the correct ordering of a simplistic hierarchy. While Stalker triumphantly declares that the human spirit should be re-throned in the human constitution,¹¹² the weakness conveyed to humanity in the fall was spiritual death rather than spiritual disordering or usurpation by the soul – leaving humanity to experience life in physical and psychological terms without the spiritual dimension.¹¹³ This means the Christian re-birth is less about making humans more spiritual and more about resurrecting fallen two-dimensional beings into the three-dimensional humans they were created to be via the re-birth of their spirits, which brings with it the restoration of functional relations with God via the Holy Spirit and the restoration of the human trichotomy by replacing the lost and/or defective human spirit. The biggest problem for the unredeemed human is not that their spirit is not atop trichotomy's hierarchical pyramid, but that humanity's connection with God is lost. Therefore, salvation is more about wholeness in relation to God and in relation to one's own constitution as opposed to the kind of re-alignment or reordering suggested in Stalker and later revisited in Kenyon and Hagin. Re-reading WoF's trichotomous anthropology in terms of the wholeness of the parts as well

¹¹¹ Genesis 1:31

¹¹² Stalker, *The Life of Saint Paul*. 53-54

¹¹³ Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13.

as the collective wholeness of the whole thereby addresses the problematic nature of trichotomy's hierarchical emphasis at the same time.

Furthermore, trichotomy's arguments that humanity is simplistically trichotomous because we are made in the image of God who is trinity overlook the revelation of God as both three and one.¹¹⁴ Therefore, precisely because humanity is made in the image of God, we cannot be simply or exclusively tripartite. Rather, we are also one (as God is one – and thus monistic). At the same time, we are dichotomous (body and soul – or in other words comprised of physical and non-physical attributes). *And* we are trichotomous (*pneuma*, *psyche*, *soma*-based interconnected systems) perhaps in some sense reflecting the triune nature of God. Taken together, a both-and approach gives us additional language for engaging with the human constitution. Additional terms relating to these parts such as *kardia* (heart) and *nous* (mind) offer further specifics, adding to the integrative framework. For example, heart could be read as the intersection between the spirit and soul; and *nous* as relating specifically to intellectual reasoning faculties to soul-level emotions.

Overall, it is apparent that the more trichotomy is emphasised as human parts, the more it tends towards an almost modal anthropology and thus the more problematic it becomes as a feature of WoF. Just as modality is problematic in the trinity, so it is in the *imageo Dei*. By contrast, a triune as opposed to trichotomous anthropology allows any subsequent WoF system to avoid the pitfalls of the inherently partite language of trichotomy. Thinking in triune as opposed to trichotomous terms also addresses the issues associated with WoF's inconsistent interpretation of biblical Greek anthropological terms (analysed in 1.2.2.2) and allows for multiple perspectives on the human constitution that remain internally consistent. Using the language of triunity is also more consistent with the multi-dimensional

¹¹⁴ Such as Hagin, *Zoe: The God Kind of Life*, 35. *Zoe* draws on pre-Hagin sources, but compare Genesis 1:26 and Deuteronomy 6:4.

language of Hagin and the variety of ways Kenyon handles trichotomy in his writings (see 1.1.3).¹¹⁵ In short, a WoF system would benefit from viewing the human constitution as more triune rather than trichotomous, resulting in an emphasis on wholeness over hierarchy.

Nevertheless, the inherent hierarchy of WoF trichotomy results in the elevation of the human spirit, which provides a rationale for divinisation and the theological basis for WoF's realised soteriology. WoF trichotomy specifically results in the absolutism necessary for the kind of faith and authority teaching evident in WoF and thereby positions 'faith' as the means of connecting the present realities of the spiritual dimension with material outcomes in the physical realm. With trichotomy having established the platform for divinisation and continuing to operate as an interpretative lens, faith is positioned to act as the conduit for manifestation of believed spiritual realities – namely healing and prosperity.

However, while WoF's trichotomy teaching does represent an entry point in a potential system of interconnected beliefs, it is not a system by itself. As stated in the contextualisation (see 1.1.3), trichotomy teaching shows evidence of connection with teaching on authoritative prayer, specifically 'binding and loosing', both of which represent common ground with WoF's particular faith teaching. Specifically, Jessie Penn-Lewis and Kenyon appear to have followed a similar trajectory.¹¹⁶ Therefore, from the entry point of WoF trichotomy, the analysis now moves on to WoF concepts of faith in the next chapter.

¹¹⁵ Hagin, *Man on Three Dimensions*.

¹¹⁶ King, "The Restoration of the Doctrine of Binding and Loosing."

CHAPTER 2: FAITH

We now turn our attention to the questions of how the elevated position of the human spirit found in WoF trichotomy relates to WoF notions of faith, notions so inherent to the movement's teaching that it is often known as the faith movement.¹

Faith is selected as the focus of the second chapter for two reasons. First, the highly realised soteriology of the human spirit resulting from WoF trichotomy necessarily requires a conduit connecting it with the material outcomes integral to WoF's testimony of health and wealth. Belief in the contemporary efficacy of biblical health and wealth promises necessitates a rationale for their manifestation. And second, because the concept of faith is so integral to WoF theology that it is both inherent in its name and is the subject of Scriptures foundational to the movement and its theology.

Since trichotomy points to a soteriology that includes a form of divinisation,² WoF teaching generally argues that the miraculous is normative in the life of believers, something that is referred to as the walk of 'faith'.³ In other words, WoF trichotomy results in the kind of realised soteriology that is inseparable from having 'the God kind of faith', to use Kenneth Hagin's idiom.⁴ As a result, WoF notions of faith appear to be positioned as the means of connecting the realities of the divine spiritual dimension with material realisation.

Trichotomy provides the rationale for divine-human union in the human spirit, potentially making WoF's theology of faith a conduit connecting belief with manifestation. Similarly, WoF concepts of faith appear to act as a junction between trichotomy and subsequent features

¹ McConnell, *The Promise*, 3.

Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, xi.

Bruce Barron, *The Health and Wealth Gospel: What's Going on Today in a Movement That Has Shaped the Faith of Millions?* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 11.

² At least as far as the human spirit is concerned.

³ Kenneth W. Hagin, *Faith Takes Back What the Devil's Stolen*, 11th printing, 2004. ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1982), 17, 25.

WoF, Tulsa, Kenneth Hagin Evangelistic Association, February 1974, 4.

⁴ Hagin, *Faith Bible Study Course*, 127.

of WoF. Indeed, this chapter on WoF's doctrine of faith follows the chapter on trichotomy precisely because faith appears to act as a bridge between the trichotomy entry point and the subsequent features of WoF.

In order to trace the historic roots of WoF's faith teaching and in order to analyse this theology, chapter 2 is divided into two sections – the first (see 2.1) uncovers the origins of Hagin's understanding of faith as a means of understanding WoF's faith teaching as a whole. The second is an analysis of that teaching within the established context (see 2.2). The contextualisation begins by examining widely held assumptions relating to the provenance of WoF's faith teaching. From here, the writings of Kenyon and Hagin as well the proto-WoF sources that influenced them are analysed to the extent that they illuminate WoF understandings of faith. The second part of the chapter uses insights gained in the first part as the basis for its analysis of WoF concepts of faith as they pertain to trichotomy. The second part also assesses how WoF readings of Mark 11 support the movement's faith teaching.

2.1 Word of Faith Notions of Faith in Context

Beginning with the widely held assumption that contemporary WoF notions of faith originate with Hagin and Kenyon, this section continues by examining the earliest influences on Hagin's faith teaching as a means of setting WoF's theology of faith in its historical context. In other words, we can gain greater insight into Hagin's faith teaching if we can identify and analyse its sources. Having begun with Hagin's own testimony and the initial sources he identifies, the contextualisation continues by examining other contemporary and earlier sources of faith teaching in order to aid analysis of the theological function of faith teaching both in each of those earlier sources and to assist the theological analysis of the function of WoF concepts of faith in relation to trichotomy and then to subsequent features.

2.1.1 Sources of Kenneth Hagin's Faith Teaching

Kenneth Hagin is sometimes referred to as the 'father of the Faith movement'.⁵ And, since this chapter specifically focuses on WoF faith theology, that assumption forms an appropriate starting point for analysis of the origins of such faith teaching. However, while Hagin may be seen as WoF's father, McConnell is outspoken in his charges that – owing to widespread usage of Kenyon's writings across a range of WoF subjects – Kenyon is 'the true father of the Faith Movement' and therefore the movement's inherent faith teaching.⁶ Meanwhile, Hagin reports that he received his teaching via unwitnessed and therefore unverifiable visions of Jesus.⁷ However, the influence of several human sources has been repeatedly demonstrated in secondary analysis.⁸ I focus on the verifiable sources of Kenneth Hagin's doctrine of faith.

Hagin's faith theology is rooted in his personal testimony of salvation and divine healing from a terminal heart condition as a teenager 'by faith' and so Hagin's testimony provides the ideal opportunity to examine the genesis of his faith theology.⁹ Hagin testifies that he was converted after a series of visions of hell led him to give his 'heart to the Lord' on 22 April 1933.¹⁰ Afterwards, he remained bedfast but began reading his grandmother's Bible

⁵ McConnell, *The Promise*, 3.
Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity*, 220.

Paul King calls Hagin "the most extensive propagator" of Kenyon's teaching in his work on faith theology, King, *Only Believe*, 65.

⁶ McConnell, *The Promise*, 14n18. McConnell also suggests that Hagin plagiarised John A. MacMillan on the interrelated subject of authority or authoritative faith. In addition, McConnell further accuses Hagin of plagiarising Finnis Jennings Dake, although McConnell does not substantiate these claims on the pages referred to in n18. Cf. *Ibid.*, 69-71.

⁷ Kenneth E. Hagin, *I Believe in Visions* (Faith Library Publications, 1984). McConnell, *The Promise*.

⁸ *The Promise*, 14n18; 69-71.

In addition, Bosworth's influence on Hagin should not be underestimated. As Hagin writes in the preface to *The Name of Jesus*, "I was personally acquainted with Bosworth. The last time I was in one of his meetings, he was 77." Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Name of Jesus*, Legacy (2007) ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1979), 10. For examples of Hagin's unattributed use of Bosworth's writing see: Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 85n97. Christopher J. Richmann, "Living in Bible Times: F.F. Bosworth and the Pentecostal Pursuit of the Supernatural" (Baylor University, 2015), 364. Bosworth biographer Roscoe Barnes III makes comparable observations - Roscoe Barnes, 2008.

⁹ Kenneth Hagin, E., *I Believe in Visions* (Faith Library Publications, 1984), 14.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

and Mark 11:24 became the ‘verse that was to transform my life’.¹¹ Because the verses immediately preceding Mark 11:24 are an explicit example of Christ teaching what it means to have ‘faith in God’, and because the passage is so intimately connected to both Hagin’s testimony and his resulting message, Mark 11:22-24 stands out as particularly significant to any analysis of WoF notions of faith.¹² For that reason, this chapter continues its analysis by focusing on Hagin’s particular reading of Mark 11:22-24.

According to Hagin, during the next year or so after discovering Mark 11:24, he wrestled with the text until he saw in August 1934 that ‘you have to believe when you pray. The having comes after the believing’.¹³ In other words, Hagin had come to understand that he needed to act on what he believed Scripture said regarding his status as healed irrespective of any symptoms his body experienced – a belief that would later be termed sensory denial.¹⁴ Hagin’s revelation from the passage was basically two-fold. First, believers can have whatever they ask or more specifically say. And second, the petitioner must believe they receive at the time they pray as opposed to when an answer to prayer manifests. Shortly after receiving his revelation of the meaning and application of Mark 11:24, Hagin testifies that he rose from his bed and tentatively began to walk, regaining his strength over the next couple of weeks.¹⁵

While biblical Scripture in general and Mark 11:22-24 in particular were significant to Hagin, his grandmother’s ‘Methodist’ Bible was not the only written source of Hagin’s embryonic faith doctrine.¹⁶ In addition, Cornelia Nuzum’s *The Life of Faith* was the first

¹¹ Ibid., 14.

¹² Mark 11:22-24.

¹³ Hagin, *I Believe in Visions*, 25.

¹⁴ Ackerley, *Importing Faith: The Effect of American 'Word of Faith' Culture on Contemporary English Evangelical Revivalism*, 149. Vreeland, "Reconstructing Word of Faith Theology: A Defense, Analysis and Refinement of the Theology of the Word of Faith Movement," 8. Lie, *E. W. Kenyon: Cult Founder or Evangelical Minister?*, 82.

¹⁵ Hagin, *I Believe in Visions*, 27.

¹⁶ Hagin, *I Believe in Visions*, 13.

book Hagin read after rising from his death bed.¹⁷ A 1974 edition of Hagin's *Word of Faith* magazine emphasises the influential nature of Nuzum's book, saying it was 'highly esteemed by Kenneth Hagin' and 'the first book he read as he began his walk of faith besides his Bible'.¹⁸ And yet, Cornelia Nuzum is never explicitly mentioned let alone directly cited in any of Hagin's books.¹⁹ Together, the esteem in which Hagin held Nuzum's book, its overtly faith-oriented subject matter and because Hagin read *The Life of Faith* at such an early and formational point in his ministry suggest that Nuzum's writing was a highly influential source. However, Nuzum does not feature in existing analyses of WoF theology. Since the influence of Cornelia Nuzum's work on Hagin has been almost completely neglected in favour of Kenyon's influence, let us examine Nuzum as a source for contextualising Hagin's (and also WoF's) particular faith theology.

2.1.2 Cornelia Nuzum as a Foundational Source of Hagin's Faith Teaching

Cornelia Nuzum (1856–1942) was an early Pentecostal healing minister and missionary to Mexico who emphasised faith and healing.²⁰ In 1911 Nuzum began ministering in Carrie Judd Montgomery's 'Home of Peace' faith home.²¹ The earliest reference to Nuzum in Montgomery's guestbook is 4 July 1907,²² which suggests their connection began at least four years earlier. Whenever their relationship began, Nuzum was clearly inspired by Montgomery, specifically with regard to her understanding of what might be called faith-that-

¹⁷ According to Rhema Bible Training Centre transcriber, Kenneth Hagin Ministries editor and WoF minister Billye Brim. Cf. Billye Brim, *The Blood and Glory* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Harrison House, 1995), 17.

¹⁸ *WoF*, Tulsa, Kenneth Hagin Evangelistic Association, February 1974, 4.

¹⁹ However, Nuzum was one source of the inspiration for Brim's *The Blood and the Glory* and is quoted at length repeatedly from page 17 onwards.

²⁰ Cornelia Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 1958 ed. (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1928), Foreword.

²¹ Carrie Judd Montgomery, "A Beloved Helper," *Triumphs of Faith* 32, no. 9 (1911): 216. Cf. Jennifer Miskov, "Life on Wings: The Forgotten Life and Theology of Carrie Judd Montgomery (1858-1946)" (University of Birmingham, 2011), 377.

²² "Life on Wings," 377.

takes or acquisitive faith.²³ A message left by Nuzum in Montgomery's guestbook in 1911 reads: "I feel that I know better how to 'take' the things 'freely given us of God.' I feel better fitted for service and more fixed in purpose to be ALL for God and to glorify Him."²⁴ That is significant because Nuzum appears to have already experienced divine healing in 1883.²⁵ For Nuzum to write that she was only learning about acquisitional faith for healing 18 years later, after spending time with Carrie Judd Montgomery, suggests a development in Nuzum's theology of faith healing. As a result, Montgomery can therefore be seen as a key influence in the development of Nuzum's faith teaching, which was later articulated in *The Life of Faith* and was, in turn, influential on Hagin's early development (see 2.1.1).

Having found that Mark 11 and Cornelia's Nuzum's *The Life of Faith* are the only written sources known to have influenced the initial development of Hagin's faith teaching (see 2.1.1), we now turn to what Nuzum wrote on the subject of Mark 11. To summarise, I found that Hagin received two key faith-related revelations prior to the testimony that his later ministry was built upon – 1) that believers can have what they *say* and 2) believers must believe they receive when they pray irrespective of their physical condition. The question is: how does Hagin's faith theology compare with Nuzum's teaching within the pages of *Life of Faith*? And to what extent is Hagin's faith teaching derived from Nuzum?

Nuzum's first of a number of explicit references to Mark 11 occurs in a chapter on 'strength' in the *The Life of Faith*.²⁶ Here, she – like Hagin after her – exhorts readers to believe and confess, irrespective of physical symptoms: 'Of course, you must think it and believe it, but you must also *say* it because Mark 11:23 says you shall have what you say...'.²⁷ Nuzum's strong emphasis on the verbal confession of healing faith irrespective of

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 378.

²⁵ Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 11.

²⁶ Ibid., 34.

²⁷ Ibid., 34. Emphasis retained from original.

symptoms can accurately be described as sensory denial and positive confession – the subject of the next chapter. However, because *Life of Faith* was published in 1928, and because it is a collation of Nuzum's earlier writings, Nuzum's teaching on the subject pre-dates Hagin's faith teaching by two to three decades and WoF as an established movement by even more. Since Nuzum therefore taught sensory denial and verbal confession on the basis of Mark 11 decades before Hagin did, and since Nuzum was the earliest non-biblical source of teaching after Hagin's salvation and healing experience, on this point alone Nuzum must be regarded as a key source of Hagin's faith teaching. But there is considerably more evidence of Nuzum's influence on Hagin.

Nuzum's *Life of Faith* describes a scenario reminiscent of Kenneth Hagin's initial healing testimony: 'Psalm 41:3 says God will strengthen even on a bed of languishing'.²⁸ The similarity between Nuzum's general faith teaching and such a specific example of healing from a bed of languishing, something that also reflects Nuzum's personal testimony,²⁹ prompts the further question: did Hagin read Nuzum after rising from his own bed-ridden state or was Nuzum's book actually part of the inspiration for his healing revelation? Did Nuzum provide the interpretative context necessary for Hagin's very similar reading of Mark 11? And was Nuzum the source of the faith emphasis necessary for Hagin to make Mark 11 and faith a central part of his hermeneutical apparatus?

A later chapter in *The Life of Faith* called 'Endure' sees Nuzum address Hagin's central verse (Mark 11:24) directly, asking: 'Do we...rejoice, thank and praise God as we would if we could see, feel and use the thing for which we prayed?'³⁰ Because Nuzum is specifically addressing Mark 11:24 and because her exhortation to thank and praise ahead of

²⁸ Ibid., 34.

²⁹ Ibid., Chapter 1.

³⁰ Ibid., 48. The same point is made four years earlier in another of Nuzum's articles: Cornelia Nuzum, "Rejoice," *Triumphs of Faith*, no. January (1924), 8.

healing manifestation is so similar to Hagin's approach, it is difficult not to conclude that Nuzum influenced Hagin's personal revelation and his later faith teaching. And since Nuzum encourages verbal affirmation of the completed work of divine healing ahead of physical manifestation, Nuzum's words should once again be considered an example of proto-positive confession and sensory denial teaching.

Another reference to Mark 11:23 in a chapter on 'resisting the devil' sees Nuzum further connect her understanding of faith with a doctrine of verbal faith confession: 'Your own mouth can hasten the victory greatly...Say, "I refuse to have this sickness," no matter how much Satan tries to make you feel or see it.'³¹ Nuzum continues by explicitly advancing the specific reading that proved so important for Hagin, saying: 'Jesus tells us in Mark 11:24 that if we believe we receive, *when we pray* we shall have it...'.³² Indeed, Nuzum illustrates the emphasis she wants to communicate to the reader with her use of italics. The same reading is then reiterated again: 'One translation of Mark 11:24 is, "When you pray, believe you *have* received what you asked for..."', again using italics to highlight her intended meaning that believers should consider healing in the present tense irrespective of symptoms.³³ In other words, Nuzum's emphasis is virtually identical to Hagin's 'The having comes after the believing' teaching.³⁴ The only difference is that Nuzum's teaching is at least a decade earlier than Hagin's initial healing and far earlier than Hagin's published teaching. Nuzum's use of italicized words in this passage is particularly important because they represent a pre-existing source of the emphasis Hagin reports he received by revelation in an unnamed book that he read.

Nuzum's influence on WoF teaching is even more evident in the writing of Hagin's

³¹ *The Life of Faith.*, 64.

³² *Ibid.*, 72. Original emphasis retained.

³³ *Ibid.*, 92. Original emphasis retained.

³⁴ Hagin, *I Believe in Visions.*, 25.

son, Kenneth W. Hagin Jr., and specifically in his *Faith Worketh by Love*.³⁵ Indeed, certain passages in that short book virtually reproduce Nuzum's words in *The Life of Faith*. For example, in one passage relating to what might be called acquisitive faith, Hagin Jr. writes: 'Faith is the hand that takes the things we need from God. Everything Jesus purchased for us on Calvary can be obtained by faith. This includes salvation, healing, the fullness of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit...' ³⁶ 50 years earlier, Nuzum wrote: 'Faith is the hand that takes things from God. All that Jesus purchased can be had by faith. Salvation, healing the fullness of the Spirit, the fruits, the gifts and the graces of the Spirit...' ³⁷ Thus, Hagin Jr.'s words are almost identical to Nuzum's phrasing. The clearest difference is Hagin's addition of 'on Calvary', which brings with it a hint towards the importance of atonement theology in WoF. However, the agreement that 'faith is the hand that takes' what Christ has 'purchased' on behalf of humanity reflects the acquisitive nature of WoF's doctrine of faith.

Hagin Jr.'s book continues to mirror *Life of Faith*, interspersing Nuzum's words with a narrative contextualising her thoughts within Hagin Jr.'s experience of the 1970s faith movement, stating:

The Bible says demons believe and even tremble—but they never receive anything. Why? Because they don't have any love. They are filled with hate and fear. Because we must have faith that works by love, it would be well for us to see how that kind of love gets started, and what its characteristics are. Proverbs 10:12 says, 'love covereth all sin.' First Peter 4:8 says, 'charity (or love) shall cover the multitude of sins.' Put these two Scriptures together, and they say, 'Love covers all sins, even when there is a multitude of them' ...How many is a multitude? Don't we usually use the word

³⁵ Kenneth E Hagin, *Faith Worketh by Love*, 1994, 18th printing ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1979).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁷ Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 83.

multitude’ when there are more elements to something than we can name? Think of it: This real, genuine love of God will cover, hide, and put out of sight more sins than we can even name.³⁸

Compared with Nuzum’s much earlier work, it is clear that the thrust of Hagin’s work is directly transposed from *The Life of Faith*, which says:

The Bible says devils believe so intensely that they tremble, but their faith brings no results because they have no love, and God says it is the faith that worketh by love which avails. Since we must have a faith that works, and which works by love, it will be well for us to see how that sort of faith works. We are told that ‘Love covereth *all* sins.’ Prov. 10:12. 1 Peter 4:8 says ‘Charity (love) shall cover *all* sins even when there is a *multitude* of them. Who can tell how many there are in a multitude? ‘Multitude’ is a word generally used to denote more than you can name. Think of it—real, genuine love will cover, hide, put out of sight more sins than you can name.’³⁹

Hagin’s redeployment of Nuzum’s words continues elsewhere in *Faith worketh by love*, with the Bible verses and order in which he quotes them directly following Nuzum’s writing in *The Life of Faith*. Indeed, *The Life of Faith* is clearly used as an outline for most of *Faith Worketh by Love*, with Nuzum’s words interspersed by 1970s WoF context and anecdotes from Hagin Sr.

Since *The Life of Faith* is not referenced and there are no mentions of Nuzum’s name in *Faith Worketh by Love*, the aforementioned passages are clear examples of Hagin Jr’s unattributed re-use of Nuzum. They also reveal the extent to which both Kenneth E. Hagin

³⁸ Hagin, *Faith Worketh by Love*., 9-10.

³⁹ Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*., 83.

Sr. and Kenneth W. Hagin Jr. derived their faith teaching from Cornelia Nuzum.⁴⁰ And therefore, the centrality of ‘faith that works’ – meaning faith that obtains the manifestation of salvation, healing and the fulness of the Spirit – is demonstrably derived from Nuzum.

Taken together, the similarities between Nuzum and Hagin’s writings suggest Hagin’s Mark 11 teaching is substantially derived from Nuzum’s writings. Such a conclusion raises at least two further questions. First, while obviously connected, how does the Nuzum/Hagin reading of Mark 11 function as part of a wider WoF system? And second, since Nuzum is a source of Hagin’s faith doctrine, where did Nuzum’s faith teaching come from? The first question is addressed in the second part of this chapter. In the meantime, the contextualisation continues by addressing the question of the origins of Nuzum’s faith teaching.

2.1.3 Carrie Judd Montgomery as a Source of Nuzum’s Faith Teaching

As well as serving as a missionary to Mexico and a healing minister at Carrie Judd Montgomery’s Home of Peace, Cornelia Nuzum contributed to Montgomery’s faith-orientated *Triumphs of Faith* journal from at least January 1912 and was also enthusiastically endorsed by Carrie’s husband George Montgomery at a 1914 Camp Meeting.⁴¹ Since *Life of Faith* was published in 1928, 21 years after Nuzum began her connection with Montgomery, it is highly likely that the faith teaching that is so central to the book was influenced by Carrie Judd Montgomery and Nuzum’s time at the Home of Peace. Indeed, Nuzum’s time spent with

⁴⁰ Similarly, Bosworth’s citation of Nuzum also suggests a degree of influence on another source of Hagin’s teaching. See: “Satan is busy trying to take from us what we take from God.” F. F. Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 9th ed. (Grand Rapid, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 116-17. Bosworth’s pre-*Life of Faith* quote of Nuzum indicates that Nuzum had a degree of influence on Bosworth. Nuzum only published one book and the majority of her other articles were published in Montgomery’s *Triumphs of Faith* journal. Since *Christ the Healer* was first published before *Life of Faith*, Bosworth appears to have been influenced by Nuzum and Montgomery. Additional research beyond the scope of this thesis could identify the specific sources of the texts Bosworth quotes and answer questions relating to who influenced whom.

George Montgomery, “In the Time of the Latter Rain,” *Triumphs of Faith* (1914): 189. Nuzum’s earliest *Triumphs of Faith* article “Living Faith” contains most of the same material as the 16th chapter of *Life of Faith*, “Faith and love” some 16 years later. Cf: Cornelia Nuzum, “Living Faith,” *ibid.* (1912): 3. and *The Life of Faith*, 83.

Montgomery and the aforementioned entry in Montgomery's guestbook testify of Montgomery's role as a source of Nuzum's understanding of acquisitive faith,⁴² something that is developed in an article entitled 'He that eateth me' which Nuzum published in Montgomery's *Triumphs of Faith* journal a few months later. In 'He that eateth me', Nuzum says: '...Jesus is the great Table filled with all that is needed, and He says, "take, eat." We take from God by asking and believing that when we pray we do receive (Mark xi:24).'⁴³ According to Nuzum, time spent with Montgomery is directly connected with Nuzum learning how to take by faith things graciously given by God. In other words, Montgomery is influential to Nuzum's acquisitive faith-orientated reading of Mark 11, a teaching that was subsequently transmitted to Hagin via Nuzum's *The Life of Faith*.

In addition, McConnell suggests Hagin 'quotes' Montgomery directly in some of his writings.⁴⁴ However, neither McConnell nor Hagin have referenced these citations, so it is difficult to locate those examples.⁴⁵ Still, Hagin's quotation of Lillian B. Yeomans' testimony of a 'praise cure', which took place at Carrie Judd Montgomery's healing home, could represent one example of Hagin making a direct reference to Montgomery.⁴⁶ It is therefore worth noting that by the time this same testimony arrives in the writings of Kenneth W. Hagin, Yeomans' original direct reference to Montgomery has gone.⁴⁷ As a result, definitively identifying the specific examples of Hagin Snr. citing Montgomery has so far proved elusive.⁴⁸

Montgomery published two teaching books. *The Prayer of Faith* is Montgomery's

⁴² Miskov, "Life on Wings," 377.

⁴³ Cornelia Nuzum, "He That Eateth Me," *Triumphs of Faith* (1912).

⁴⁴ McConnell, *The Promise*, 69.

⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Hagin's chief editor, Billye Brim, features testimony and biographical details of Montgomery in her book Brim, *The Blood and Glory*, 17-22.

⁴⁶ Lillian B. Yeomans, *Healing from Heaven* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1926), 61.

⁴⁷ Kenneth W. Hagin, *The Untapped Power of Praise* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1990), Chapter 1.

⁴⁸ Yeomans, *Healing from Heaven*, 61. This citation is nevertheless the most probable example.

healing testimony in written form. *Secrets of Victory* is a collection of Montgomery's journal articles centring on faith- and victory-related teachings. She also published roughly 70 years of her *Triumphs of Faith* journal and some poetry. In addition, A. B. Simpson compiled a collection of Montgomery's *Triumphs of Faith* editorials into *The Life of Praise*.⁴⁹

While *The Prayer of Faith* was prompted by Montgomery's healing testimony, it is also one of the first examples of a theological rationale for divine healing by faith.⁵⁰ Indeed, chapter three of *The Prayer of Faith* seeks to define 'The nature of faith'.⁵¹ James 5's promise that 'the prayer of faith will save the sick' is an inherent part of Montgomery's healing narrative from the title onwards. However, when it comes to theologically justifying her confidence in claiming that promise, Montgomery relies on imputed righteousness as grounds for such faith: 'We are so apt to lose sight of the all-important fact that we have no righteousness of our own...but we may, and must, put on Christ, as our righteousness....we may *then* claim all the wonderful blessings...'⁵² Thus, Montgomery teaches that by first repenting and secondly believing that God imputes His righteousness, the believer is able to contend for the supernatural promises of God in a way that is otherwise impossible. While neither Mark 11 nor 'the faith of God' are explicitly mentioned, by connecting the realised soteriology of the imputed righteousness of Christ with the ability to contend for supernatural outcomes in the temporal realm, Montgomery's teaching is comparable with Hagin's God-kind-of-faith message.⁵³ Indeed, King criticises Kenyon for later making the same supposed

⁴⁹ Carrie Judd Montgomery, *The Life of Praise*, Fourth ed. (Oakland, California: Triumphs of Faith, 1910). It is not clear exactly when *Life of Praise* was published. The copy I read suggests 1910 in pencil inside the cover. Since the book was originally compiled by A. B. Simpson, it must have been published before his death in 1919. In any case, it was at least nine years before Nuzum's *Life of Faith* was published. Cf. Miskov, "Life on Wings," 170 n270.

⁵⁰ "Life on Wings," 44.

⁵¹ Carrie Judd Montgomery, *The Prayer of Faith*, 1894 ed. (San Francisco: The Hicks-Judd Co., 1880), 37.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 38-39.

⁵³ See Introduction to this Chapter.

error of conflating imputed and imparted righteousness found here in Montgomery.⁵⁴

From here, Montgomery deploys Hebrew 11:1 as the biblical definition of faith: ‘faith is the substance (margin, confidence) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen...Having faith in God is believing His word without looking at...any apparent obstacles in the way of His keeping His promises.’⁵⁵ Montgomery’s admonition that believers attend to the word and avoid ‘considering any apparent obstacles’ represents a harbinger for later, explicit sensory denial teaching.

By 1911,⁵⁶ Montgomery’s own faith theology had expanded into the realm of verbal confession, with Montgomery saying of Hebrew 11:1 and Rom 4:17: ‘This attitude of calling those things which be not as though they were, is faith, and this only is faith.’⁵⁷ By linking faith with verbal confession, Montgomery once again implicitly connects faith and divine-human union since the imagery of Hebrews 11:3 refers to God’s act of creation. And therefore, whether said explicitly or not, Montgomery’s teaching is compatible with the faith-of-God doctrine later espoused by Kenyon and Hagin. For Montgomery, faith issues from imputed and/or imparted righteousness and is evidenced by verbal affirmations of the divine reality irrespective of their appearance.⁵⁸

Mark 11:24 is invoked on two occasions in the 1894 edition of the *Prayer of Faith*. First, in husband George Montgomery’s salvation and healing testimony in the preface and secondly in a later chapter on ‘Believing God’s word’.⁵⁹ Here, Montgomery frames faith for the miraculous in the present tense in a way that is later replicated in Nuzum, Kenyon, Hagin

⁵⁴ According to King, “classic faith leaders [including Montgomery, A. B. Simpson and Spurgeon et al] understood this righteousness to be *imputed*...not *imparted*...” King, *Only Believe*, 88.

⁵⁵ Montgomery, *The Prayer of Faith*, 42-43.

⁵⁶ The time at which Nuzum testifies that her own understanding of faith grew through contact with Montgomery

⁵⁷ Carrie Judd Montgomery, “Some Secrets of Faith,” *Triumphs of Faith* 31, no. 4 (1911): 73.

⁵⁸ Interestingly, contra King, Charles Spurgeon explicitly calls for belief in both imputed and imparted righteousness, calling them “precious boons of grace” Charles H. Spurgeon, “The Agreement of Salvation by Grace with Walking in Good Works,” (London: Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 1891).

⁵⁹ Montgomery, *The Prayer of Faith*, xvii-xviii, 96.

and Bosworth.⁶⁰

Referring to Mark 11:24, Montgomery italicises ‘*believe that ye receive them*’,⁶¹ highlighting her intended emphasis that Christians can receive at the moment they believe. Montgomery’s italicisation in this passage represents the same emphasis seen in Nuzum and Hagin’s treatment of Mark 11:22-24 after her.⁶² And since Montgomery wrote that passage between 1879 and 1880, Montgomery’s is by far the earliest example of a teaching that is later revisited by Nuzum, Kenyon, Bosworth and Hagin.

A further account of Montgomery’s testimony found in *Secrets of Victory* reveals that Mark 11:24 was at the centre of her initial healing experience. First Montgomery testifies that God ‘flashed upon (her) heart’ that ‘you have asked. Now since God is true, He has already answered and you have only to TAKE HIM AT HIS WORD and walk by faith...’⁶³ Here ‘walk by faith’ refers to the acquisitional nature of faith that Montgomery is advocating, the metaphorical act of believing for a material outcome as well as the physical act of walking which had hitherto been impossible for Montgomery. Therefore, Montgomery’s testimony of rising from her sickbed as well as the specific Scripture at the centre of it are remarkably similar to both Nuzum and then Hagin’s accounts.

Furthermore, Mark 11 and particularly Mark 11:24 feature heavily in *The Life of Praise* where three consecutive chapters are based on that Scripture.⁶⁴ Crucially, in ‘Believe ye receive’ Montgomery teaches that ‘God has provided the gift (answer to prayer) in Christ, and is holding it out to us all the day long’, adding that believers should ‘take’ what they

⁶⁰ To mention just a few.

⁶¹ Montgomery, *The Prayer of Faith*, 96.

⁶² Further research could assess the extent to which Montgomery’s direct influence on Nuzum subsequently influenced Hagin via Nuzum.

⁶³ Montgomery adds: “I had never known the truth of Mark 11:24, but the Lord gave me this Scripture afterwards to confirm what He had taught me by His Holy Spirit.” Carrie Judd Montgomery, *Secrets of Victory*, ed. Sadie A. Cody (Oakland, California: Triumphs of Faith, 1921), 26. Original emphasis retained.

⁶⁴ Namely: “Believe ye receive”, “Believing and receiving” and “Only believe”. *The Life of Praise*, 55, 63 and 74.

believe for.⁶⁵ Here Montgomery's faith teaching uses the same Scripture as Nuzum to make a very similar point – that the prayers of believers are already answered at the point of petition. In addition, Montgomery introduces what she later terms 'taking or appropriating faith'.⁶⁶

By 1911, Montgomery's understanding of Mark 11 has also extended with the addition of extra exegesis of verse 22. Also pointing to Galatians 2:20, Montgomery says: 'We are told in Mark xi:22..."Have the faith of God."' Later *Triumphs of Faith* articles such as 'The Prayer of Faith' (1917) and 'The Substance of Faith' (1928) re-iterate the importance of the 'have the faith of God' rendering to Montgomery's faith theology – decades before Nuzum's book as well as Hagin's testimony and consequent teaching on the subject.⁶⁷ Indeed, as we have seen, Montgomery's emphasis on the twin themes of believing one receives at the point of prayer and the faith-of-God reading of Mark 11:22 later become the core of Hagin's faith teaching.

2.1.4 Kenyon's Influence on Hagin's Faith Teaching

Hagin's emphasis on his favourite Mark 11 passage can also be found in arguably his favourite source, Kenyon. Kenyon taught a combined approach to his God-kind-of-Faith reading of Mark 11:22: '..."Have the faith of God."..."Have faith in God." We have both. We have God's faith reproduced in us by His living Word, by His nature that is imparted to us.'⁶⁸ Kenyon's acceptance of two renderings of Mark 11:22 also indicates a connection with the trichotomy-driven elevation of the human spirit identified in Chapter 1. By suggesting that 'We have God's faith reproduced in us by His living Word', Kenyon connects faith and the human spirit.⁶⁹ Since trichotomy teaching is foundational for much of Kenyon's teaching.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 55.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 58.

⁶⁷ Carrie Judd Montgomery, "The Prayer of Faith," *Triumphs of Faith* 37, no. 9 (1917). "The Substance of Faith," *Triumphs of Faith* 48, no. 7 (1928).

⁶⁸ Kenyon, *The Two Kinds of Faith: Faith's Secrets Revealed*, 138.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

And since trichotomy teaches that the human spirit is the facet of the human constitution that connects with the divine, the human spirit is the only location within which ‘God’s faith’ can be ‘reproduced’.⁷⁰ Furthermore, it is the only anthropological dimension in which ‘His nature’ can be ‘imparted to us’.⁷¹ Therefore, in this passage, Kenyon connects the highly realised soteriology of his ‘I am a spirit, I possess a soul, I live in a body’ dictum, with God’s faith by virtue of His divine nature being imparted to us.⁷² In addition, the means by which that divine-human union occurs is revealed. Believers experience divine union as they interact with ‘His Word’.⁷³ Thus, this passage and the whole ‘faith of God’ teaching are worthy of further attention in the theological analysis section later in this chapter.

In addition, Kenyon’s reading of Mark 11:24 emphasises that faith thanks God for something the believer ‘already possesses which has not yet materialized’,⁷⁴ and so is remarkably similar to Hagin’s sensory denial-esque faith understanding. However, the book from which this quote comes (Kenyon’s *Two Kinds of Faith*) was first published in 1942, some eight years after Kenneth Hagin’s healing took place. Furthermore, Mel Montgomery,⁷⁵ reports that Hagin came across Kenyon’s teaching in ‘the late 1940s or early 1950s’⁷⁶ Since early mentors, the Goodwins, met Hagin four years after his healing in ‘late 1938’, and because they report that ‘after being healed...(Hagin) taught, preached, and practiced faith for years before he came across the writings of Kenyon’,⁷⁷ Kenyon’s teaching could not have

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² “The Hidden Man of the Heart” in E. W. Kenyon, *Advanced Bible Course* (Seattle: Kenyon Gospel Publishing Society). Hagin, *Man on Three Dimensions*. Hagin, *The Human Spirit; Volume 2 of the Spirit, Soul, and Body Series*.

⁷³ Kenyon, *The Two Kinds of Faith: Faith’s Secrets Revealed*, 138.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 121.

⁷⁵ Mel Montgomery was a protégé of Assemblies of God ministers Rev and Mrs J. R. Goodwin who mentored Hagin for the first four decades of his Pentecostal ministry.

⁷⁶ This event was remarkable because it put a strain on Hagin’s relationship with the Goodwins owing to their disagreement with aspects of Kenyon’s teaching. Mel Montgomery, C., *The Genuine Flow: How the Faith Giants Flowed in the Spirit and How You Can Too* (Xulon Press, 2010), 39. Hagin himself testifies that he was introduced to Kenyon in 1950: Hagin, *The Name of Jesus*, 9.

⁷⁷ Mel Montgomery, C, "Kenneth Hagin's Two Faith Messages," (2008), 3.

been the initial source of Hagin's distinctive faith teaching. Rather, the only identifiable sources of Hagin's distinctive pre-Kenyon faith teaching are the Bible and Cornelia Nuzum's *Life of Faith*.

While evidence of the importance of God-kind-of-Faith and sensory denial teachings extrapolated from Mark 11:22-24 is apparent, they do not explain the range of usage of the term faith identified in the wider Hagin and Kenyon body of work. McConnell's and Bowman's research both began to codify the range of usages of faith into a list of sub-doctrines under the banner of the overall subject of faith. For his part, Bowman identifies: 'faith as a formula', creative power, 'the force of faith', 'the God kind of faith', 'faith in the Name', as well as authoritative faith as key WoF beliefs relating to faith and found in the teaching of Kenyon and Hagin.⁷⁸ To these we can add 'walking by faith', which Paul L. King's *Only believe* finds to be the central dynamic of WoF's understanding of faith.⁷⁹ For his part, King suggests WoF teaching on faith exists to explain how believers can 'walk by faith' with reference to Scriptures such as 2 Corinthians 5:7.⁸⁰ Furthermore, King is clear from the outset that nineteenth and early twentieth century evangelical sources are so similar to 'contemporary Word of Faith' that they too 'can also be called a "Word of Faith" movement'.⁸¹

Kenyon is similarly broad in his usage of the term 'faith'. Like Hagin, section headings in Kenyon's faith-orientated writings reveal much about the multifaceted way the term faith is handled. In one book Kenyon refers to 'kinds of faith',⁸² 'phases of faith',⁸³

⁷⁸ McConnell, *The Promise*, 135-40.

⁷⁹ King, *Only Believe*.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁸² Kenyon, *The Two Kinds of Faith: Faith's Secrets Revealed*, 13.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 25.

‘creative faith’,⁸⁴ ‘dominating faith’,⁸⁵ ‘revelation faith’,⁸⁶ and exhorts believers to ‘walk by faith’.⁸⁷ Focusing on Kenyon’s *The Two Kinds of Knowledge* and *The Two Kinds of Faith*,⁸⁸ Ben Pugh interprets Kenyon’s diverse usage of ‘faith’ to mean ‘intuition, spiritual perception, the ability to create, trust or confidence in things, the ability to take what God offers, authority’ and ‘unqualified committal’ at various times in the two books.⁸⁹ Taken together, Kenyon’s conceptions of faith are broadly comparable with Hagin’s, which is understandable in light of Hagin’s extensive use of Kenyon.⁹⁰

Therefore, an initial survey of Kenyon and Hagin’s teaching on faith demonstrates the diverse and multi-faceted way in which this term is deployed. There are also key commonalities between Kenyon and Hagin, but due to evidence of Hagin’s faith teaching prior to his reception of Kenyon’s teaching, Kenyon cannot be described as the initial source of Hagin’s faith teaching. Indeed, the God-kind-of-Faith emphasis is not evident in Kenyon’s books until *Jesus the Healer* in 1940. Likewise, Kenyon paid little attention to Mark 11 in his books until *The Wonderful Name of Jesus* in 1927. And then it is only a brief reference to Mark 11 as a means of supporting Kenyon’s teaching on faith in the name of Jesus.

Throughout part one, Cornelia Nuzum’s *Life of Faith* is shown to be the initial but overlooked source of Kenneth E. Hagin’s faith’s theology, which in turn influenced WoF teaching. Nuzum’s status as the earliest source of theological influence on Hagin and the originator of what has become a central part of WoF doctrine is particularly significant because it precedes the known sources of Kenneth Hagin’s teaching, namely Kenyon. Indeed, Nuzum’s faith teaching forms the basis of Kenneth Hagin’s own testimony of healing by

⁸⁴ Ibid., 27.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 29.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 35.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 36.

⁸⁸ Ibid. E. W. Kenyon, *The Two Kinds of Knowledge* (Kenyon’s Gospel Publishing Society, 1942).

⁸⁹ Ben Pugh, "What the Faith teachers Mean by Faith: An Evaluation of the Faith Teacher’s Concept of Faith in the Light of Hebrews 11:1 and Mark 11:22-24" (Regents Theological College, 2004), 16.

⁹⁰ McConnell, *The Promise*, 6-12.

faith, which is central to both the establishment of the WoF movement and its particular faith teaching. Specifically, Nuzum's reading of Mark 11:24 and her teaching that adherents must believe they receive their petitions at the point of prayer was adopted by Hagin and became central to wider WoF teaching.⁹¹ In other words, Nuzum's influence brings with it a concept of radical, acquisitive faith. And because the rationale for that belief is connected to belief in a highly elevated human spirit resulting in miraculous outcomes, such faith could even be called divine faith.

Nuzum attributes the development of her 'faith that takes' doctrine to Carrie Judd Montgomery. And Montgomery's usage of Mark 11 includes a reading of verse 22 that suggests miraculous belief is a result of acquiring divine faith, specifically the 'the faith of God'. The development of Kenyon and Hagin's faith theology follow the same pattern in the same order chronologically. Both begin by teaching equivalent 'faith that takes' readings of Mark 11:24, before later developing their faith teaching to include 'faith of God' readings of Mark 11:22. Kenneth E. Hagin called this 'the God kind of faith' and during Hagin's ministry his emphasis on Mark 11 grew to the extent that in the 1980s his son joked that some in the WoF movement mistakenly believe that his father wrote Mark 11:22-24.⁹²

Such readings of Mark 11:22 position faith-of-God as the rationale for having 'faith that takes', according to parallel readings of Mark 11:24. These readings also offer a potential bridge to the conclusion of Chapter 1, that WoF trichotomy teaching results in an elevation of the human spirit to the point of divine communion, which makes the human spirit the conduit for the faith of God, what might be called divine faith, to be appropriated by the believer. So, with that in mind, the second part of this chapter analyses the role and function of these notions of faith in relation to trichotomy.

⁹¹ See (2.1.1) to (2.1.4).

⁹² Hagin, *Faith Worketh by Love*, 9-10.

2.2 The Role and Function of Divine Faith

The historical contextualisation of WoF's doctrine of faith identified Nuzum and Montgomery's readings of Mark 11:22 and 11:24 as foundational to the faith teaching within the WoF system. The first half of the chapter found that their readings of that pair of texts were echoed in Kenneth E. Hagin's theology of faith and through Hagin are central to WoF's overall faith theology. Those Nuzum and Montgomery-sourced readings particularly suggest that Bible-based faith should be acquisitional and issues from reception of what might be termed divine faith. According to Bowman, 'the God kind of faith' teaching is common to 'all Word of Faith teachers' and the other sub-doctrines flow from it.⁹³ In light of the contextualisation's conclusions, the second half of this second chapter focuses on those two core notions of faith by examining their meaning, place and function amongst the interconnected features of WoF. From here, the role such faith teachings play in forming a bridge with WoF anthropology, which was found to be a theological entry point into WoF in chapter 1, is examined while also asking which other theological features are signified by these doctrines.

The second half of the current chapter offers a theological analysis of WoF readings of Mark 11:22 and 24 as the centrepieces of WoF notions of faith. I argue that WoF readings of Mark 11:22 and 24 buttress the belief in divine faith (see 2.2.1) that proceeds from the elevated status of the human spirit provided by the trichotomy entry point (see chapter 1) and that such faith teaching acts as a bridge connecting WoF's realised soteriology of the human spirit with outcomes in the soul and the body. The teachings associated with Mark 11:24 and Mark 11:22 are referred to as acquisitive faith and subjective genitive faith respectively for the purposes of the analysis. These terms are used because they provide a concise summary of the theological argument they contain and help to illustrate the main thrust of WoF

⁹³ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 110-13.

readings of Mark 11:24 and Mark 11:22 respectively.

2.2.1 *Acquisitive Faith: Believe When You Pray*

The analysis begins with acquisitive faith for two reasons. First, because it forms the earliest landmark in the development of WoF's theology of faith. And second, because acquisitive faith has the potential to provide a connecting function with other WoF features by acting as a bridging motif providing momentum towards other parts of the system.

WoF's theology of acquisitive faith springs from Nuzum's readings of Mark 11:24,⁹⁴ readings that bring with them the impetus for developing a 'faith that takes'.⁹⁵ For Nuzum and later Hagin, a 'faith that takes' is a faith that believes it has received the desired outcome of its petition at the point of prayer and, furthermore, that believing in this way actively lays hold of the same outcome as opposed to passively waiting for a response to prayer. Therefore, such faith may also be referred to as acquisitive faith.

Within its foundational context of Mark 11:24, the concept of acquisitive faith necessitates that 'believe that ye receive' is read in the temporal bounds of 'when ye pray', that by believing at the point of prayer 'ye shall have them' and the subject of one's petition is answered. Such readings are connected to the understanding that the Greek verb *lambanō* rendered 'receive' in the authorised version should be understood to mean 'to take' or 'to seize'.⁹⁶ And therefore faith-filled prayer is framed as an active seizure as opposed to a passive reception.⁹⁷ Furthermore, WoF readings of Mark 11:24 make desire for the object of

⁹⁴ See 2.1.

⁹⁵ Miskov, "Life on Wings," 337.

⁹⁶ See Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 77, who defines the verb thus: "The Greek word in Mark 11:24, which is translated receive, is a word that means "take with much force, seize with a grip that will not be shaken off." See also Montgomery, *Secrets of Victory*, 47, who suggests "the force of the expression in the original is 'believe that ye seize or take them' ...". Cf. Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 33 and 81.

⁹⁷ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Real Faith*, Second edition, 11th printing, 1995 ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1985), 7.

a believer's petition a key boundary of what is permissible,⁹⁸ which broadens the possibilities available to the believer, but must also be held in tension with the ethics of the Holy Scripture so important to WoF.⁹⁹ Still, acquisitive faith necessarily requires a strong foundational rationale otherwise it is indistinguishable from presumption. For that, WoF teaching relies on the subjective genitive readings of Mark 11:22 the movement inherited from its spiritual forebears.

2.2.2 Subjective Genitive Faith: The Function of 'the Faith of God'

WoF readings of Mark 11 further emphasise verse 22, favouring English renderings akin to the nineteenth century *Pulpit Commentary's* 'have the faith of God'.¹⁰⁰ Such readings result in the understanding that (divine) faith is received from God as opposed to God being the object of human faith. As a result, these renderings can also be referred to by their grammatical difference – objective- and subjective-genitive; faith in or faith of God.¹⁰¹

However, subjective genitive readings of Mark 11:22 are not uniform in their interpretations. Noting that WoF critic Charles Farah also held to a subjective genitive reading of Mark 11:22, Paul King highlights six ways in which WoF's antecedents handled 'faith of God' interpretations: '1) God as the source or author of faith, 2) the faithfulness of God, 3) the faith of Jesus Christ, 4) God's own faith – the faith that God possesses and exercises as part of His nature, 5) special mountain-moving faith, not everyday faith and 6) dual or multiple interpretations...' ¹⁰²

For Hagin, Mark 11:22 can and perhaps should be interpreted 'have the faith of God'

⁹⁸ *Mountain Moving Faith* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1993), 151.

⁹⁹ Something Nuzum is explicit about: Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 77-78.

¹⁰⁰ H. D. M. and Exell Spence, Joseph S., *The Pulpit Commentary: Mark & Luke*, 1980 ed. (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1889), 123, 26.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*; King, *Only Believe*, 171, 179; Vreeland, "Reconstructing Word of Faith Theology," 58.

¹⁰² King, *Only Believe*, 179-85.

as opposed to ‘have faith in God’.¹⁰³ While Hagin is likely to have received his interpretation from Kenyon,¹⁰⁴ as King has shown,¹⁰⁵ belief in ‘faith of God’ readings significantly pre-date Kenyon.¹⁰⁶ And while Nuzum and Montgomery represent the closest and earliest non-Kenyon influences on Hagin identified so far, other sources known to Hagin, such as Dowie and Spurgeon,¹⁰⁷ espoused very similar teachings too.¹⁰⁸ However subjective genitive readings first reached Hagin, that nineteenth century theological context provides the basis for the ‘God-kind of faith’ phrase Hagin developed.¹⁰⁹

Derek Vreeland suggests ‘WoF theology utilizes the “God kind of faith” construct as a foundation to build an anthropology that humanity was created to operate in faith in reflection of God’s ‘use’ of faith.’¹¹⁰ However, as we saw in Chapter 1, WoF anthropology is based on a trichotomous understanding, which culminates in the proposition that the human spirit is elevated to a divine standing at salvation (see 1.2.2.2). As a result, WoF notions of faith proceed from the movement’s trichotomous anthropology rather than its faith doctrine itself being a rationale for elevating the human status.

Continuing on from the entry point established by trichotomy, WoF teaching moves to the belief that God created the world by faith, echoing King’s fourth reading of Mark

¹⁰³ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Faith Library Publications, 1992), 127. Cf. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 111.

¹⁰⁴ This is certainly McConnell’s view. McConnell, *The Promise*, 141.

¹⁰⁵ King, *Only Believe*, 179-85.

¹⁰⁶ See Charles Spurgeon preaching on Mark 11:22 and Mark 11:23 respectively in “The Moral of a Miracle”, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1444 (London, 1878) and “True prayer, true power”, *New Park Street Pulpit*, Vol. VI (London, 1860). Bowman argues that “the God kind of faith” language originates with A. T. Robertson Cf. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 112. But in any case, the idiom appears to have been popularised by Hagin.

¹⁰⁷ Hagin claims to have read, preached and memorised at least some of Spurgeon’s sermons “word for word”: Hagin, *Growing up, Spiritually*, 91.

¹⁰⁸ Kenneth E. Hagin, *He Gave Gifts Unto Men: a Biblical Perspective of Apostles, Prophets, and Pastors* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1992), 43, 102. Both references to Dowie in this book demonstrate Hagin’s awareness not only of Dowie’s existence, but of the complexities of Dowie’s life and ministry. King, *Only Believe*, 179-87. Paul King demonstrates how numerous sources before, during and after Hagin and Kenyon adhered to subjective genitive readings of Mark 11:22.

¹⁰⁹ Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 160.

¹¹⁰ Vreeland, “Reconstructing Word of Faith Theology,” 58.

11:22.¹¹¹ Here, Vreeland's analysis is helpful as a means of explaining the outworking of WoF's trichotomy-based faith theology, but may benefit from some further reconstruction in order to better communicate the function of faith within WoF theology. In short, WoF's faith theology is anchored to its anthropological understanding, reasoning that, if God created everything by faith, and if humanity is a reflection of God,¹¹² humanity can create by faith too. More specifically, as we found in the first chapter, WoF's anthropology reflects its Christology (see 1.2.2.2), with the human spirit acting as the direct connection with the Spirit of God. The argument is that Christians can therefore operate in a similarly creative way to God by acting on the impetus of the same divine faith. Thus Hagin's 'God-kind-of-faith' results from adherence to WoF trichotomy. Specifically, Hagin-esque 'God-kind-of-faith' teaching proceeds from WoF trichotomy, which results in a realised soteriology of the human spirit. In other words, the language of divine faith can be seen clearest through the anthropological lens WoF trichotomy provides. And such a lens brings with it the momentum towards divine faith. However, while such divine faith is a product of the interpretative lens provided by trichotomy, it also appears to serve as both the rationale for WoF readings of Mark 11:24 and a further interpretative lens for understanding WoF notions of faith and any subsequent features at the same time.

Since WoF concepts of faith are intrinsically linked to WoF anthropology, attention should also be paid to the degree of soteriological realisation in each facet of the three-dimensional human. WoF soteriology brings with it grounds for a perfect human spirit from the point of new birth onwards, but the soul and body are seen as being in varying degrees of ongoing development, which is why Hagin says 'the new birth is not a rebirth of the human body or the mind, but it is a rebirth of the human spirit.'¹¹³ And therefore, the degree to which

¹¹¹ Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 162. King, *Only Believe*, 179.

¹¹² Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 98.

¹¹³ Hagin, *Faith Bible Study Course*, 61.

WoF soteriology can be described as realised differs across the trichotomy. Since the human spirit is the only fully-renewed dimension of the human being, according to WoF sources, the human spirit becomes key to WoF's theology of faith as the perfect connection between God and humanity. Dowie's faith teaching also reflects his anthropology and soteriology and therefore provides an example of such a rationale. For his part, Dowie directly connected the same type of 'faith of God' subjective genitive reading of Mark 11:22 with his anthropological understanding, which Dowie referred to as the 'tripartite nature' of humanity.¹¹⁴ Dowie fused believing *in* God with receiving the faith *of* God as a means of attaining 'Salvation, Healing and Holy living'.¹¹⁵ And, as a result, the degrees of realisation of divine faith differed depending on which dimension of the 'tripartite nature' is referred to.

The continued pattern of anthropological and soteriological connections are further reflected in WoF sources' use of the language of imputed righteousness as a parallel term for the divinisation of the human spirit. For example, Montgomery states: 'since we are joint-heirs with Christ, all that He has is ours...we may by faith, draw upon our inheritance day by day, for spirit, soul and body'.¹¹⁶ Here, humanity's joint-heir status is emphasised along with the access to inheritance such status confers. Furthermore, joint-heir status brings with it daily access to spiritual, mental and physical provision, Montgomery argues. But, on the other hand, this inheritance is to be drawn upon 'day by day'. The fact that Montgomery stipulates daily withdrawal means access to the divine inheritance is not completely realised at the point of conversion in all three dimensions of human existence. Furthermore, while every dimension of human nature can draw upon its divine inheritance, Montgomery's

¹¹⁴ John Alexander Dowie, "General Overseer's Notes," *Leaves of Healing*, no. 5 December 1908 (1905): 172.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. Dowie's subjective genitive understanding was based on his belief that Mark 11:22 had been mistranslated: "'have the Faith of God', said Jesus, not have faith in God as it has been wrongly translated" - "The Power of Divine Faith," *A Voice from Zion* 6 (1902): 31. Indeed, the subjective genitive reading appears to be a core belief for Dowie, with Lillian B. Yeomans reporting that "Have God's own faith" was amongst Dowie's favourite hymns and was "often repeated" - Yeomans, *Healing from Heaven*, 113.

¹¹⁶ Montgomery, *Secrets of Victory*, 17.

conclusion is made in the context of her reading of Romans 8:17 – suggesting that divine-human transactions take place *as a result* of the assuring witness of the Holy Spirit with the human spirit ‘even before pain and weakness have been taken away’ from the body.¹¹⁷ This coupled with Montgomery’s teaching that ‘we...must, put on Christ, as our righteousness...’ in order to operate in apprehending faith sets a precedent for using the language of imputed righteousness as a proxy for trichotomy-based divine-human union in the human spirit and for access to divine faith based on such a conceptual platform.¹¹⁸

Similarly, Kenyon develops the righteousness concept as a proxy for a highly realised soteriology of the human spirit, suggesting that ‘righteousness means the ability to stand in God’s presence as free from sin consciousness as Jesus was in His earth walk.’¹¹⁹ Kenyon’s righteousness contrasts standing in God’s presence with Jesus’ ‘earth walk’, with the implication that righteousness is a legal as well as spiritual state that should be appropriated in the body:

For years I have been eagerly searching for a satisfactory explanation of Romans 10:10. ‘With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.’ You understand that the word ‘heart’ is used illustratively because the heart is the life centre of man...He means the human spirit... man is a spirit. He is in the same class as God.¹²⁰

The appropriation in the body of what has already taken place in the human spirit is understood to occur via the soul, which in WoF parlance refers to any combination of the mind, will and emotions (see 1.2.2.2). And in order for this transformation to take place, faith must grow: ‘Faith grows with understanding of the Word,’¹²¹ Kenyon says, later adding: ‘As

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 16.

¹¹⁸ Montgomery, *The Prayer of Faith*, 38-39.

¹¹⁹ Kenyon, *The Two Kinds of Faith: Faith’s Secrets Revealed*, 162.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 66.

¹²¹ Ibid., 91.

the Word gains the ascendancy, there will be an unconscious faith in your own ability to trust Him. You will trust Him utterly, you will go the limit of His Word'.¹²² And therefore, Montgomery, Hagin and Kenyon are all arguing for a reborn human spirit that provides access to divine faith, but also that the manifestation of such faith requires development in the soul before it materialises in the body. In Hagin's words, 'A lack of knowledge will hinder us...we cannot act upon God's Word beyond actual knowledge of God's Word. Faith will grow with an understanding of the Word.'¹²³ So, however realised WoF's view of the reborn human spirit is, the same teaching suggests the activity of divine faith is limited by knowledge gained by the cognitive process of hearing and reading the Bible and therefore by ongoing soul development.

However, subjective genitive readings of Mark 11 coupled with the aforementioned idea of growing faith appear contradictory. How can the imputed divine faith of God, which must, if it is the faith of God, be perfect, grow? WoF's own trichotomous framework helps resolve that conflict. Believers have the faith of God in their human spirit, but according to Hagin must develop commensurate faith in their souls via the process of 'renewing our minds with the Word of God'.¹²⁴ And, as we have seen previously, the mind is commonly referred to either as synonymous with the soul or as a constituent part of the soul. In the same way, John Alexander Dowie taught 'The capacity of faith is boundless as God Himself, for true faith is, "the faith of God"' and 'There is no limit conceivable by men to the operation of a divine faith...'.¹²⁵ He also linked such concepts to the same 'faith comes by hearing' Scriptures (such as Romans 4:17) also favoured by Nuzum, Kenyon and Hagin. Again, the implication is that the faith of God can be imparted to the human spirit, but it can only be

¹²² Ibid., 56.

¹²³ Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 152.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 160.

¹²⁵ John Alexander Dowie, "How Does Faith Come?," *Leaves of Healing* 1 (1895): 381.

outworked to the degree that the soul and then the body moves in alignment with it.

As a result, WoF's faith teaching suggests operating in faith requires the renewal of the mind and the submission or 'presentation' of the body of born-again believers,¹²⁶ something that is distinctly reminiscent of Stalker's argument that the fall and redemption relate to the mis-alignment and reordering of trichotomous humanity, (see 1.1.1).

Since Spurgeon's teaching on faith grew towards his particular 'faith of God' reading after having established Mark 11:24-based 'believe that ye receive' reading of faith suggests that subjective genitive readings of Mark 11:22 interact with acquisitive faith readings of Mark 11:24.¹²⁷ And therefore, in both Spurgeon and Dowie there is evidence of a) progression from Mark 11:24 readings to Mark 11:22 'faith of God readings' and b) patterns of usage that connect belief in 'the faith of God' with boundless, even divine faith. Thus, what may be termed subjective genitive faith is not only a grammatical description of a particular reading of the original Greek text, but rather a theological means by which – as Spurgeon says – human weakness and divine strength can interface.¹²⁸

2.2.3 Subjective Genitive Readings and Their Supporting Role

So far, the contextualisation and the analysis have analysed the historical source base in order to present WoF notions within their historical and theological context and has begun to show how they function in relation to trichotomous anthropology. These sections found that WoF readings of Mark 11:22 lie at the centre of WoF notions of faith and that the movement's readings of Mark 11:24 act as both the entry point and rationale for WoF's particular subjective genitive readings of Mark 11:22. Questions relating to the legitimacy of what the

¹²⁶ Hagin, *Faith Bible Study Course*, 59.

¹²⁷ Charles H. Spurgeon, "True Prayer - True Power," *The New Park Street Pulpit* Vol. 6, no. 12 August (1860): 833.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

subjective genitive, faith of God, readings of Mark 11:22 have not been critically evaluated. Attending to such questions is important because WoF readings of Mark 11:22 not only support connected readings of Mark 11:24, but are also intimately intertwined with WoF's trichotomous anthropology. Therefore, this section critically evaluates how WoF's subjective genitive reading of Mark 11:22 could play a supporting role in any nascent system.

Much of the secondary literature relating to WoF readings of Mark 11:22 has been robustly critical of the subjective genitive rendering. McConnell says such exegesis 'is surely a monstrosity'.¹²⁹ Likewise, Bowman describes it as 'certainly a mistaken interpretation', adding that 'as all translators and commentators have recognized, the genitive "God" here is not the subjective genitive'.¹³⁰ Confusingly, Vreeland suggests that the subjective genitive rendering is deployed in five major translations, specifically the King James Version (KJV), New King James Version (NKJV), Revised Standard Version (RSV), New International Version (NIV), New American Standard Bible (NASB), and the New Living Translation (NLT).¹³¹ However, while he suggests these five translations render Mark 11:22b as 'Have the faith of God',¹³² in fact they all render the verse as 'Have faith in God' and are therefore examples of the objective genitive reading.

Nevertheless, several English Bible versions do utilise the subjective genitive reading in one way or another. The Aramaic Bible in Plain English (ABPE) translates Mark 11:22 as 'Yeshua answered... "May the faith of God be in you"'. The A. S. Worrell translation (WAS) says 'have the faith of God'. The Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition (DRA) shares the same interpretation: 'Have the faith of God'. The 1599 Geneva Bible (GNV) also says 'Have the faith of God', adding the qualifying, but not completely clear footnote 'The faith of God

¹²⁹ McConnell, *The Promise*, 145.

¹³⁰ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 112.

¹³¹ Vreeland, "Reconstructing Word of Faith Theology," 57.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 57n21.

is that assured faith and trust which we have in him.’ The Modern King James Version (MKJV) puts it like this: ‘Have faith of God’. The Message (MSG) more ambiguously translates the second half of Mark 11:22 as ‘Embrace this God-life’, which may not be as clear as other examples, but should be categorised with them on the basis that it makes the divine the source of the ‘God-life’ to be embraced and is therefore a subjective genitive reading. The, somewhat controversially titled,¹³³ Passion Translation (TPT) says ‘Let the faith of God be in you!’ based on Aramaic manuscripts, with a footnote that adds ‘It is possible to translate the Greek text as an adjectival phrase, “God-like faith” or “godly faith”’, which brings TPT’s interpretation into close alignment with Hagin’s ‘God kind of Faith’ sentiment. The Revised Geneva Translation (RGT) maintains ‘Have the faith of God’ in line with the 1599 edition. Meanwhile, the Wycliffe Bible (WYC) puts it like this: ‘Have ye the faith of God’ and Youngs Literal Translation (YLT) says ‘Have faith of God’. Finally, and most recently, the Literal Standard Version (LSV), translates Mark 11:22 as ‘have faith from God’. While not clearly positioning itself in either of the traditional camps – neither the objective ‘in’ or subject genitive ‘of’ – the LSV’s rendering leans towards the subjective genitive and thus supports theologies of the divine faith of God in the same way as the other 10 translations. Thus at least 11 English Bibles can be described as subjective genitive versions.

The A. S. Worrell translation is of particular interest because this 1904 edition is set within a WoF-consonant early North American Pentecostal theological context.¹³⁴

Specifically, Worrell’s ‘have the faith of God’ rendering of Mark 11:22 must be read in light

¹³³ Justus A. Freeman, "The Methodological Faultiness of the Passion Translation: Evidence of the Translator's Theological Importations Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 1:1-4," *Journal of Biblical Pentecostalism* 2, no. 1 (2020). See also: Andrew Wilson, "What's Wrong with the Passion "Translation"?", *Think Theology*, https://thinktheology.co.uk/blog/article/whats_wrong_with_the_passion_translation. And "The Passion "Translation" Debate: Brian Simmons Responds," *Think Theology*, https://thinktheology.co.uk/blog/article/the_passion_translation_debate_brian_simmons_responds.

¹³⁴ Michael Kuykendall, "A. S. Worrell's New Testament: A Landmark Baptist-Pentecostal Bible Translation from the Early Twentieth Century," *Pneuma* 29, no. 2 (2007): 272-73.

of its preface, which explicitly states Worrell's view that 'these Scriptures contain nothing but "live matter"; that they are as true now, and as applicable to man's needs as a *tripartite* being, as they ever were; and that God stands ready to verify all the promises He has given the world and His people in this book...' ¹³⁵ Furthermore, Worrell instructs Bible readers to seek 'to grasp all of its teachings, clearly taking in every doctrine, promise, principle, and precept, as well as every provision of the Gospel for all the needs of mankind; devoutly praying that you may have grace to appropriate every provision for your spirit, soul and body' and to have 'an experimental knowledge of it'. ¹³⁶ Defending his subjective genitive rendering of Mark 11:22 Worrell writes: 'if [have faith in God] had been the thought it would have been easy to have expressed it in the Greek. Faith originates with God; and those who have real faith have *His* faith.' ¹³⁷ Worrell therefore explicitly draws connections between trichotomous anthropology and seizing the promises of God by faith and the belief that the only 'real' faith is divine faith. With this in mind, it is worth noting that Hagin speaks highly of the A. S. Worrell translation in an acknowledgement of the influence of the teaching of Assemblies of God minister and educator P. C. Nelson on his own ministry. ¹³⁸ And therefore we must move beyond McConnell and Bowman's absolute rejection of subjective genitive renderings since their assertions are based on the faulty conclusion that there are no translations utilising that approach.

Returning to King's six variations of subjective genitive readings (see 2.2.2), WoF sources do not easily align with any single reading, but rather display the characteristics of several simultaneous readings. Kenyon, for example, adheres to subjective and objective

¹³⁵ Original emphasis retained. A. S. Worrell, *The New Testament Revised and Translated* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publishing Society, 1904), i.

¹³⁶ Ibid., iv.

¹³⁷ Original emphasis retained. Ibid., 70.

¹³⁸ Kenneth E Hagin, *The Woman Question*, 2nd printing, 1978 ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1975), 6. A number of A. S. Worrell articles were also published in Carrie Judd Montgomery's *Triumphs of Faith* journal. Cf. Miskov, "Life on Wings," 267, 77.

genitive readings at the same time, which means his views are a variation on King's sixth category (see 2.1.4). Montgomery's connection between subjective genitive readings of Mark 11:22 and Galatians 2:20 as well as her understanding of imputed righteousness in the context of trichotomy mean her understanding of faith is that it is both from God and indeed the faith of Christ, which cuts across categories 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 (see 2.1.3). Hagin himself clearly believes both that faith is imparted in the human spirit and that Christians can access God's own faith (categories 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6). Therefore, King's sixth category is the best way to concisely describe WoF's multi-dimensional understanding of faith.

So, while WoF notions of faith do not exclude objective genitive readings of Mark 11:22, they do heavily engage with a range of subjective genitive readings of the passage – often doing so from a number of different angles simultaneously based on the range of readings WoF sources inherited for their spiritual forebears. Such wide-ranging appropriations of subjective genitive readings of Mark 11:22 from a relatively broad source base provides credibility in the eyes of adherents.

Secondary criticisms of WoF notions of faith based on Mark 11:22 largely centre on two points. First, as we have seen, that such readings are based on completely erroneous exegesis.¹³⁹ And second, that such teachings advocate that believers should have faith in their human faith and are therefore 'man-centric'.¹⁴⁰ Especially when set in the context of WoF trichotomy as well as explicit admonitions towards 'having faith in your faith',¹⁴¹ such criticisms are understandable. However, they may also benefit from revision. In order to address the problems associated with anthropocentrism, a number of resolutions can be considered.

First, subjective genitive readings do not need to be accepted at the cost of objective

¹³⁹ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 2nd Edition, 112.

¹⁴⁰ McConnell, *The Promise*, 145. Cf. King, *Only Believe*, 185.

¹⁴¹ *Only Believe*, 185.

genitive readings of Mark 11 that emphasise God as the object of the faith of the believer. Kenyon and Spurgeon, for example, show evidence of both readings (see 2.2.2). Indeed, even Hagin's 'having faith in your faith' title demonstrates that movement between subjective and objective genitive language is fluid. One can have faith in as well as of something. One can believe in and have the faith of God or faith from God. King's sixth category of historical subjective genitive interpretations (dual or multiple readings) likewise demonstrates that such a multi-dimensional understanding of the concept is not unique to WoF. Indeed, as the 1599 Geneva Bible adds in its footnote on Mark 11:22, the faith of God can be seen as 'that assured faith and trust which we have in him', which itself potentially suggests a dual meaning, especially in light of any Word-of-Faith-like emphasis on what believers possess in Christ – otherwise known as 'in Him realities'.¹⁴² Furthermore, consideration of the range of subjective genitive readings espoused in WoF's own sources provides the necessary breadth to avoid dogmatic over-reliance on any single understanding of the usefulness and application of its subjective genitive readings.

Second, the WoF sources and pre-WoF sources identified so far consistently demonstrate connections between trichotomy, soteriology and faith, which provides the opportunity to connect faith with both imputed righteousness and holiness. Such a connection is clearly suggested by Spurgeon and Montgomery (see 2.1.3). Tethering theological concepts of divine faith to righteousness and holiness allows for the regulation of any human tendency towards anthropocentrism. Such a tethering in the ethical context of God's righteousness and human holiness addresses one of the major criticisms levelled against divine faith teaching. Having faith in God or even God's faith in operation within redeemed humanity is somewhat different to reliance on human faith.

Third, problems relating to WoF's tendency towards anthropocentrism can also be

¹⁴² Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 131-36.

addressed with the balancing effects of the holy Scriptures so important to the movement. Christians that profess Scripture as the ultimate authority can only apply faith in line with God's will revealed in Scripture. For example, such an approach regulates the apparently limitless 'you may have what you say' of Mark 11:24 with the 'if we ask...according to his will' of 1 John 5:14. Indeed, F. F. Bosworth taught something similar as the specific basis for faith, saying: 'Appropriating faith cannot go beyond one's knowledge of the revealed will of God', adding: "until we know what God's will is, there is nothing on which to base our faith."¹⁴³

And finally, while the ontological separateness of creator and creation cannot and should not be invalidated, neither can the imparted faith framework result in independence from God and a deistic understanding of spiritual laws because WoF's trichotomy teaching intrinsically connects God and humanity. Therefore, just as the language of trichotomy is in danger of over-reaching its usefulness the more that it emphasises the separateness of three human dimensions, notions of faith that result in independence from God should likewise be rejected. And just as the solution to the problems of trichotomy was found to be in greater re-emphasis of anthropological triunity (see 1), seeing faith as interdependence with God as opposed to independence from God provides the room for divinely empowered human agency without reducing the sovereignty of God. Furthermore, framing such agency in the context of repentance and new birth means it is the product of divine grace and not human works. And tethering such divinely empowered human agency to Scripture provides the potential for critical evaluation.

Conclusion

WoF's subjective genitive interpretations of Mark 11:22 result in its 'God kind of faith

¹⁴³ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 15, 17, 47.

readings', which function as both a supporting pillar and an engine for belief in manifestation of scriptural promises. Set in the context of WoF trichotomy, the variety of WoF readings of Mark 11:22 provide a rationale for radical, virtually unlimited and even divine faith.

Furthermore, WoF readings of Mark 11:22 provide the underpinning for the especially acquisitive nature of the foundational readings of Mark 11:24 found in Nuzum and Hagin. In combination, such readings of Mark 11:22 and 24 provide access to divine faith for the purpose of connecting the realised soteriology of the human spirit provided by WoF's trichotomy teaching on spirit, soul and body, with the more temporal experience of the rest of the trichotomy (see 1). In doing so, the skeleton of a mechanism for the manifestation of biblical promises in the temporal environment is constructed, which focuses on spoken prayer and declarations. At the same time, WoF readings of Mark 11:22 and 24 ultimately become another key hermeneutical lens through which Scripture and experience can be interpreted.

WoF's theology of faith therefore functions both as a conduit between the realised soteriology of its trichotomy teaching and desired material outcomes. So, while trichotomy is the entry point into a potential system, faith provides momentum towards the manifestation of scriptural promises and spiritual realities. Specifically, WoF's fideistic notions propel its understanding of anthropology further towards the need for external expression of belief in acquisitive and subjective genitive faith. Indeed, without external expression as a way of connecting belief in petition as access to manifestation, such beliefs could be described as circular logic since neither praxis, evidence nor outcome would be required. WoF readings of Mark 11:22 and 24 provide the inspiration for the necessary external expression in the form of vocalised, affirmatory prayer, set in an acquisitive context and made virtually unlimited by the undergirding of subjective genitive notions of divine faith. Therefore, trichotomy and faith are not ends in themselves. Rather, the combination of trichotomy-enabled divinisation and faith point in the direction of verbalised, commanding faith. And that is why positive

confession is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: POSITIVE CONFESSION

With WoF anthropology modelled after its Christology, and since the movement's doctrine of faith encourages the acquisition of that which is presently unmaterialised as well as offering access to divine faith, WoF theology is positioned to follow divine examples in the execution of faith – namely, the creative power of speech modelled by God during creation in Genesis 1. To put it another way, the first two features analysed in the opening two chapters work like this: believers are reborn in their spirits and can renew their souls or minds according to what has been established in their spirits by the Holy Spirit. Believers can then apprehend by faith and manifest temporally and physically what they believe has taken place spiritually. But how does that function? And by what means is the immaterial-material divide bridged?

Chapter two highlighted how WoF readings of Mark 11:22-24 point towards a theological structure relying on faith read through trichotomy. Mark 11:22-24 read through the interpretative lens of WoF's trichotomous anthropology can be seen as pertaining to the three dimensions of the human constitution. Read that way, Mark 11:22 is not only a rationale for access to divine faith, but a picture of the born-again believer's re-born spirit. Similarly, Mark 11:24 is positioned as a vision of what can be manifested materially as a result of such faith. But the method for bridging the gap between the immaterial and the material is so far missing. Both WoF's trichotomy and its notions of faith therefore require a mechanism for establishing temporally and physically what is believed to have taken place spiritually. This chapter hypothesises that the third feature in the system – positive confession – provides such a mechanism.

While the word 'confession' generally refers to either penitence and forgiveness or profession of faith in relation to Christianity, WoF utilisation of the term often relates to the verbalisation and affirmation of what is believed to be true. In this regard, WoF confession can be seen as a product of the context created by the first two features (trichotomy and

faith). For some, including Hagin, penitence can be too material-, self- or sin-focused and therefore can be characterised as negative confession.¹ Likewise, WoF confession is not limited to what might be called the general confession of Christian faith. And therefore, because WoF confession tends towards the creative power of words and being a faith activity rather than either penitence or a general profession of Christian belief, the term positive confession has become associated with the movement's practice of spoken faith confession.

While *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* suggests 'positive confession theology' is so central to WoF that this term can be used virtually synonymously with 'faith-formula theology',² my analysis places positive confession third in the system because WoF confession is a result of the interpretative lens proceeding from the trichotomy entry point and combined with the movement's faith concepts. Both require a mechanism for embodied manifestation. Furthermore, as Lovett's article suggests, confession is inherently connected to 'faith-formula theology'. Likewise, referring to such belief as a 'formula', Bowman says 'the doctrine that *whatever* we believe and confess, we possess' is 'a basic maxim of Word-Faith'.³ In both cases, use of the term *formula* necessarily implies the presence of a systematic theological structure connecting physically articulated words and faith. And since the term 'faith formula' cannot be interpreted or critically evaluated without first addressing the subject of WoF notions of faith, a chapter on confession must necessarily follow analysis of how faith functions in relation to the other features.

Chapter three begins by setting WoF's theology of positive confession in its historical context (3.1), before critically analysing its function in relation to trichotomy and faith (3.2). The contextualisation begins with a thematic analysis of the historical sources identified in

¹ Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 92-93.

² Lovett, "Positive Confession Theology."

³ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 195.

the first two chapters (specifically Hagin, Nuzum, Montgomery and Kenyon) in order to advance understanding of WoF's doctrine of positive confession. From here, the analysis section examines: the function of WoF readings of Mark 11:23; how confession operates as a mechanism for the manifestation of biblical promises in the temporal environment; and the role of confession in relation to trichotomy and faith.

WoF's reliance on Mark 11:22-24, teaching that believers should speak to mountains and believe what they have petitioned will manifest, also directly connects WoF's faith teaching with positive confession. However, while WoF readings of Mark 11:22 and 24 were a clear focus of Chapter 2, neither of the first two chapters paid attention to Mark 11:23 and how WoF readings of that Scripture operate within the emerging framework of interconnected features. The function of Mark 11:23 in relation to any nascent system was not analysed at the same time as the other passages because the verse's admonition to 'not doubt' and rather 'believe' is necessarily reliant on first understanding the movement's teaching on faith. Thus, following Chapter 2's analysis of WoF notions of faith, the second part of Chapter 3 critically evaluates usage of Mark 11:23 within the context established by the first half of the chapter.

Having found that WoF's trichotomy teaching acts as an entry point into the wider WoF theological network and provides the necessary interpretative lens, the second chapter found that WoF's ultimately fideistic doctrine of faith issues from those trichotomous foundations. The combination of trichotomy and faith is therefore an underlying presupposition for positive confession. Together they bring with them the belief in acquisitive, divine and even mountain-moving faith based on readings of Mark 11:22 and Mark 11:24 the movement inherited from its spiritual forebears (see 2.1). Such faith actively acquires what it petitions or, to paraphrase Mark 11:23, what it verbalises. Therefore, having previously focused on trichotomy and faith, and having found that these features point

towards and to some extent rely on faith-filled verbal affirmations, the third chapter turns its attention to positive confession.

3.1 Positive Confession in Historical Context

If ‘the doctrine that whatever we believe and confess, we possess’ is ‘a basic maxim of Word-Faith’ as Bowman suggests,⁴ we should find evidence supporting that premise within the work of key populariser Kenneth E. Hagin. Accordingly, as in the previous chapter, the historical contextualisation begins by critically analysing Hagin’s writings on the subject with a view to understanding the basis for the concept of positive confession and identifying other key features and sources.

Hagin certainly appears to make the ‘believe and confess’ teaching a key part of his work. Indeed, Hagin explicitly says in his short book of the same name ‘You can have what you say’.⁵ Furthermore, Hagin argues that ‘what you say is your faith speaking’,⁶ which directly links confession and faith together, while also depersonalising the faith of the believer to a degree. Hagin’s decision to refer to speaking by faith as in some way distinct from the whole person – ‘your faith speaking’ – is an implicit reference to a kind of hierarchical trichotomy, paralleling the ‘You are a spirit, you possess a soul and you live in a body’ maxim examined in the previous chapter.⁷ Thus, positive confession appears to operate as a unifying practice of trichotomy and faith along the lines of the following proposition. In Hagin’s terms, believers are primarily a spirit, post-conversion, the re-born human spirit interfaces with the Holy Spirit, enabling the believer to literally acquire the faith of God.

Having initially suggested ‘you can have what you say’ in his eponymous booklet,

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Kenneth E. Hagin, *You Can Have What You Say* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1979), 1.

⁶ Ibid., 7.

⁷ Such depersonalisation also potentially allows for subsequent concepts of faith as a force, which warrants further research but are beyond the scope of this thesis.

Hagin continues: ‘Believe it in your heart; say it with your mouth. That is the principle of faith. You can have what you say’,⁸ emphasising the systematic nature of his belief in positive confession. Once again, Hagin’s references to confession not only connect faith with verbal declarations, but also reveal the influence of the underlying trichotomous interpretative lens. As we found in chapter 1, Hagin reads the words heart and spirit interchangeably (see 1.2.2.2). So, when Hagin writes ‘believe it in your heart’, it means: believe it in your human spirit. When Hagin pairs ‘believe it in your heart’ with ‘say it with your mouth’, he involves both the soul and the body because language formation is impossible without in some way utilising the mind (or soul) and words cannot be uttered without the involvement of a physical body. For Hagin, then, confession unifies the whole trichotomous entity in a verbalised act of faith.

Historically, Hagin places his revelation of this formula in 1933 prior to his initial healing and part of that testimony.⁹ At the same time, Hagin once again points to Mark 11 as a key part of his biblical source material – although on this occasion verse 23 is emphasised and paired with Mark 11:24.¹⁰ Hagin’s account of that healing moment repeats references to his grandmother’s ‘Methodist Bible’ identified in chapter 2. But, once again, Hagin does so without citing Cornelia Nuzum’s *Life of Faith*, the book Hagin was reading at the time of his healing (see 2.1.1).

While for many Christians the word confession is primarily associated with exposing and renouncing sin with the hope of forgiveness, Kenneth E. Hagin taught that ‘if we just...confess our faults and failures...This will build weakness and sin and failure consciousness into our spirits.’¹¹ Indeed, Hagin’s *Faith Bible Study Guide* contains no less

⁸ Hagin, *You Can Have What You Say*, 17.

⁹ Ibid., 14.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 92.

than 27 sub-sections referring to confession in positively-orientated terms. Hagin did not refute confession of sin per se, but he did lament the lack of positive confession and suggested confession should 'centre around' five 'principal truths', namely:

1. What God has done for us through Christ in His plan of salvation.
2. What God has done in us by the Word and the Holy Ghost in the new birth and the infilling of the Holy Ghost.
3. Who we are to God the Father in Christ Jesus.
4. What Jesus is presently doing for us at the right hand of the Father where He ever lives to make intercession for us.
5. What God can accomplish through us, or what His Word will accomplish through us as we proclaim it.¹²

Taken together, Hagin's definition of and introduction to confession begins to reveal the complex, interconnecting and apparently systematic role of positive confession. First, Hagin directly connects confession with the strength or weakness of the human spirit, pre-supposing his understanding of trichotomy. From here, Hagin's introduction associates confession with salvation (principle 1), Spirit baptism (2), identification and positional identity (3), the present-day ministry of Jesus as great high-priest and intercessor (4), the role of prophetic proclamation of the Bible (5).

The origins of positive confession have generally been attributed to New Thought and other 19th century metaphysical groups, adopted by Kenyon and transmitted to WoF via Kenneth E Hagin.¹³ However, the Kenyon connection – as the thesis that Kenyon derived his teaching from the 19th century metaphysical groups is known – has been contested on the

¹² Ibid., 92-93.

¹³ Terris Neumann, "The Cultic Origins of Word-Faith Theology in the Charismatic Movement" (1989), 2. McConnell, *The Promise*, 30. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 32.

basis that historical evidence for Kenyon's alignment with New Thought is scant and inconclusive, while multiple sources demonstrate that Kenyon was active throughout his career in Baptist and Pentecostal circles.¹⁴ Bowman, for example, concludes that Kenyon's teaching 'is more unlike New Thought than like it' and that Kenyon 'self-consciously rejected the metaphysical cults on doctrinal grounds'.¹⁵

The connection between Kenyon and Hagin is not in dispute and McConnell's identification of the repeated re-use of Kenyon in Hagin is consistent with evidence that Hagin relied on a number of pre-pentecostal sources as inspiration for his ministry (see 2.1). Within this group, my research found evidence that the writings of Cornelia Nuzum are a particularly significant source for the foundations of Hagin's teaching (see 2.1.2). Indeed, Hagin read Nuzum's *Life of Faith* decades before he encountered the work of Kenyon,¹⁶ which emphasises the importance of Nuzum's work to the establishment of Hagin's teaching and, in turn, WoF doctrine. And yet, Nuzum's influence has been almost completely overlooked by scholarship and is unattributed in Hagin's writings. Therefore, the contextualisation section of this chapter follows on from the findings of chapter 2 and begins by analysing *The Life of Faith* as a source of Hagin's positive confession teaching. This occurs at the cost of references to the well-researched Kenyon.

3.1.1 Nuzum as an Initial Source of Hagin's Confession Doctrine

Chapter 2 showed that Cornelia Nuzum's writings and especially *The Life of Faith* are an extremely influential source on the development of Kenneth Hagin's faith teaching; the earliest and therefore initial influence on Hagin; and, nevertheless, have been completely overlooked by secondary analyses thus far. For all these reasons, this part of the

¹⁴ *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 42. Cf. McIntyre, E. W. *Kenyon and His Message of Faith*.

¹⁵ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 42.

¹⁶ Montgomery, "Kenneth Hagin's Two Faith Messages," 3.

contextualisation re-reads Nuzum as a potential source of Hagin's positive confession teaching, which subsequently forms the basis of the wider movement's positive confession emphasis. Specifically, the centrality of Cornelia Nuzum's emphasis on believing and receiving at the point of petition and her acquisitive reading of Mark 11:24 to Kenneth Hagin's theology of faith and initial testimony of healing. Chapter 2's findings lead us to revisit the first book Hagin read following his conversion and prior to entering ministry – Nuzum's *Life of Faith* – as a source of his later confession teaching.

'Strength', the sixth chapter in *Life of Faith* contains a particularly complete example of a pre-WoF confession teaching.¹⁷ The passage begins by introducing the subject, stating that divine provision applies to the whole person 'spirit, soul and body' and thereby grounding Nuzum's confession teaching within a trichotomous understanding.¹⁸ Nuzum continues by suggesting that believers need to take hold of 'the strength of God...by faith', which illustrates the presence of the combination of a belief in the possibility that the faith of God could be imputed and that such faith can be acquired by believing in Jesus.¹⁹ Put differently, objective genitive faith in Jesus can result in reception of subjective genitive faith of God.

Nuzum continues in that vein and quotes Joel 3:10, saying "'Let the weak say, I am strong'....Not say, 'I shall be strong,' but 'I *am* strong now.'" Not say it after you get strong, but say it while you are weak.'" In so doing, Nuzum presents a biblical rationale for positive confession and also intrinsically links it with the rejection of physical experience – not on the basis that such sensory feedback is inaccurate, but due to her belief that God's word is a superior truth, which can be acquired by faith via verbal confession. McConnell later refers to the rejection of physical feedback in favour of faith confession as 'denial of sensory

¹⁷ Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 32.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

reality’,²⁰ attributing Kenyon as Hagin’s source for such material. However, once again, as in the case of Hagin’s faith teaching, here in Nuzum we find an explicit source of positive confession and sensory denial teaching in the same book Hagin testifies he read as part of his initial healing before he embarked on ministry. In other words, Hagin’s understanding of positive confession was being influenced by Nuzum decades before he began interacting with the work of Kenyon.²¹

Nuzum’s chapter continues by articulating Mark 11:23 as scriptural grounds for positive confession: ‘Of course you must think it and believe it, but you must also *say* it, because Mark 11:23 says you shall have what you say...’²² Here, Nuzum teaches that positive confession is a pan-trichotomous process of thinking (relating to the soul), believing (relating to the human spirit) and speaking (relating to the body). Taking these examples together, throughout the ‘Strength’ chapter, Nuzum simultaneously expresses her latent belief in a WoF-compatible trichotomous understanding of human anthropology and the necessity of verbal confession of faith irrespective of symptoms – explicitly on the basis of Scriptures including Mark 11:23.

Later in a subsequent chapter entitled ‘Resisting the devil’, Nuzum reiterates her positive confession teaching, saying: ‘Your own mouth can hasten the victory greatly. God says in Mark 11:23, you shall have what you say if you do not doubt. Say, “I refuse to have this sickness” no matter how much Satan tries to make you feel or see it.’²³ In this instance Nuzum’s insistence on the vocalisation of sickness-refusal again connects positive confession

²⁰ McConnell, *The Promise*, 109.; Vreeland, "Reconstructing Word of Faith Theology: A Defense, Analysis and Refinement of the Theology of the Word of Faith Movement," 8.

²¹ Indeed, as an older and more established figure in the divine healing movement and Pentecostal pioneer, the younger Kenyon could have been influenced by Nuzum’s mentor Carrie Judd Montgomery in whose journal several of Kenyon’s articles were published. See Miskov, "Life on Wings," 244n107. In order to answer the question of the extent to which that was the case, further research beyond the scope of this thesis would be required.

²² Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 33.

²³ *Ibid.*, 64.

and sensory denial on the grounds of Mark 11:23, but also suggests that positive confession has an acceleratory role in the acquisition of the physical manifestation of faith petitions.

Nuzum concludes this section with the most explicitly positive confession passage by warning against negative confession as it pertains to physical symptoms:

Never say, 'I have pain, disease, doubt, or other evil.' Say, 'I will not have it. I will not let Satan put it on me. I refuse to accept it or recognize it or own it.' Continue to say, 'I am delivered, no matter how I feel or look.' Praise hastens the victory. Believe the thing is *done*, praise and rejoice, not because it is going to be done, but because it is done, even though you cannot see it nor feel it...²⁴

For Nuzum, then, reality is defined by what has taken place in the spirit as opposed to what has manifested materially. Likewise, for Nuzum, there is little practical difference between the sensory denial, positive confession and 'rejoicing in faith', which appears to be synonymous with the Pentecostal pursuit of a Praise Cure.²⁵

Beginning with Romans 4:17, Nuzum's 'Things that be not' chapter within *The Life of Faith* directly addresses issues of positive confession and sensory denial despite the fact that these particular terms are not used.²⁶ Nuzum argues that declaring realities that are not materially manifest such as healing or righteousness is not lying because 'God cannot lie, and God calls the things that be not as though they were'.²⁷ From here, paraphrasing Mark 11:24, Nuzum explains that 'faith is the hand with which we take from God....All that we need for spirit, soul, and body'.²⁸ In doing so, Nuzum connects the context of a trichotomous

²⁴ Ibid. Original emphasis retained.

²⁵ Yeomans, *Healing from Heaven*, 61.

²⁶ Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 81. "Things that be not" was originally published in Montgomery's *Triumphs of Faith* journal in 1921, seven years before Nuzum compiled *The Life of Faith*. "Things That Be Not," *Triumphs of Faith* (1921).

²⁷ *The Life of Faith*, 81.

²⁸ Ibid.

anthropology and acquisitive faith based readings of Mark 11:24. Nuzum's readings are consonant with other positive confession and sensory denial pre-cursors to WoF. The implication is that positive confession is a means of apprehending by faith that which is promised by God irrespective of its state of manifestation and is thus an example of sensory denial. Since we know that Hagin Snr. read *The Life of Faith* in the foundational phase of his pre-ministry development, and since the above passage from Nuzum's 'Things that be not' chapter is later appropriated by Hagin Jnr. in *Faith Worketh by Love* (see 2.12), Nuzum's influence on the Hagin family and therefore the wider WoF movement is once again clearly apparent.

Towards the end of *The Life of Faith*, Nuzum adds a further example of her proto-positive confession teaching: 'Another way to make faith grow is to declare it. That is why God says, "Hold fast the profession of your faith." Faith becomes stronger as you say you believe'.²⁹ In so doing, Nuzum advocates verbal faith declarations as a means of growing faith as well as a means of apprehending by faith that which is promised by God. Nuzum therefore extends the boundaries of what faith confession/profession means. Rather than being limited to a general confession of Christian faith here – in writing that was published in the decade around 1924 – Nuzum suggests any verbalisation of a Scripture-based conviction can be considered a confession of faith. By adopting this position, Nuzum is doing for positive confession what Phoebe Palmer's 'altar theology' did for sanctification – condensing the route to the miraculous into a faith-based 'shorter way'.³⁰

Overall, Nuzum's writing is a clear pre-cursor to the kind of positive confession teaching later advocated by Hagin and others in the WoF movement. While a range of different Scriptures are used with reference to her proto-positive confession teaching, Nuzum

²⁹ Ibid., 91.

³⁰ Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 59. Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South* (Harvard University Press, 2008), 30-32.

repeatedly returns to Mark 11 and specifically verses 23 and 24. Likewise, she tends to situate such readings in the context of references to spirit, soul and body, which implies trichotomous anthropology and exhortations towards acquisitive faith. Interestingly, many of Nuzum's early positive confession examples are warnings not to negatively confess unbelief in the present – if unseen – faith reality. Nuzum's belief in faith profession, meaning the proclamation of what one is convinced God promised in Scripture irrespective of contrary physical evidence, and the so-called praise cure are notable exceptions to the pattern of returning back to Mark 11:22-24.

3.1.2 Praise Cure and Positive Confession

The writing of Cornelia Nuzum presents further evidence suggesting WoF teaching originated from a line of pre-Pentecostal sources in addition to Kenyon. However, existing accounts tend towards the suggestion that WoF inherited its beliefs from New Thought via Kenyon. The identification of specific alternative sources challenges the prevailing narrative and its associated theological conclusions. Specifically, the identification of Cornelia Nuzum as a key source of faith, healing and positive confession theology – with those features often found in combination with each other – suggests the theological interrelatedness of those features.

Nuzum was herself influenced by pre-existing sources including early faith healing advocate Carrie Judd Montgomery. At the same time, Nuzum's positive confession-laden references to what appears to be a pre-existing praise cure teaching also raise questions relating to where Nuzum's early positive confession teaching originated. Therefore, we now turn our attention to praise cure as a potential pre-cursor to positive confession.

Kenneth Hagin Sr. does not quote or cite Nuzum directly. However, Hagin does indirectly quote Nuzum's mentor Carrie Judd Montgomery at one point. This instance is

particularly pertinent to positive confession because it occurred around the time that Nuzum – inspired by Montgomery – developed her existing belief in miraculous health towards concepts of acquisitive faith:

There was a missionary from China, staying at Mrs. Carrie Judd Montgomery's, Beulah Heights, Oakland, Calif...who had the most wonderful healing of small-pox while on the field, by the application of the Praise Cure...³¹

This account elevates the spiritual truth revealed to the missionary via the Bible to the centre of the testimony, above the circumstances. The missionary also sought to verbally express such faith through sung praise until the believed spiritual result manifested physically. Since the verbal confession of 'God's promise' was exalted above and in contradiction to the missionary's physical experience, the cited example of positive confession can also be termed sensory denial. However, in that case positive confession is packaged within a sung format relating to physical healing and so is therefore termed 'the Praise Cure'. The episode proved important enough to the WoF movement that this particular example, which was first published by Lillian B. Yeomans, is taken up by the movement's second generation via Kenneth Hagin Jr.³²

The case recounted by Yeomans is not an isolated example of either praise cure or positive confession teaching in Montgomery's work. For example, the leading article in the January 1924 edition of *Triumphs of Faith* is entitled 'The Power of Praise and Testimony'.³³ The article culminates in Montgomery's articulation of her reading of Mark 11:23: 'There are mountains of difficulty and trouble that come into our lives, and God wants us to speak to

³¹ Yeomans, *Healing from Heaven*, 61.

³² Hagin, *The Untapped Power of Praise*., Chapter 1.

³³ Carrie Judd Montgomery, "The Power of Praise and Testimony," *Triumphs of Faith* 44, no. 1 (1924): 3-5.

those mountains, in faith, and command them to be removed into the sea. This is a commanding faith, the Lord Jesus Himself speaking through us with great authority.³⁴ Later Montgomery capitalises the second part of Mark 11:23, emphasising: ‘HE SHALL HAVE WHATSOEVER HE SAITH’ and explaining ‘This meant not only thinking about it, but saying and saying it in faith.’³⁵ By characterising Mark 11:23-based positive confession as ‘commanding faith’ in action and ‘Jesus Himself speaking through us’, Montgomery is implying something akin to the elevated human spirit teaching of WoF trichotomy. And because it results in ‘commanding faith’ expressed through positive verbal confession, Montgomery is exhibiting trichotomy, faith and positive confession in one instance. Furthermore, Montgomery’s strong highlighting of the second half of Mark 11:23 – the same phrase Hagin used as the title of his book 50 years later – is a striking similarity of emphasis.

In May 1910, as editor of the periodical, Montgomery published an unattributed article defining ‘Attitudes of Faith’ in *Triumphs of Faith*. The article begins by stating that, after praying, ‘the next step is to believe that our prayer is answered, to take the answer and stand upon it’.³⁶ In doing so, the text follows the WoF reading of Mark 11:24 identified in chapter 2, although no scriptural basis is referenced. That exhortation towards acquisitive faith is followed by the explanation that ‘We claim it, or bring it into our consciousness...by declaring over and over again that it is ours already.’³⁷ Verbal declarations are thereby positioned as a tool for making the ‘consciousness’, or soul, aware of the spiritual truth that is ‘already ours’.³⁸ In other words, the article advocates the use of positive confession as a tool for renewing the mind to the spiritual truth, which suggests underlying trichotomous anthropology. From here, the author – presumably Montgomery – reminds readers that ‘we

³⁴ Ibid., 4.

³⁵ Ibid., 5.

³⁶ Carrie Judd Montgomery, "Attitudes of Faith," *Triumphs of Faith* 30 (1910): 106.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

do not begin to feel these things at first, but by earnestly and faithfully saying them and acting as though they were so', which connects positive confession with sensory denial and acting-in-faith teaching.³⁹ 'This', the text continues, 'is faith which brings the power in manifestation' – a definition that links faith, positive confession and the material manifestation of petitions.⁴⁰ Next, the article argues in WoF-consonant terms that 'Now is the accepted time' for faith and that 'saying or believing salvation and deliverance are to be, will forever keep them...just a little ahead of you, but never quite realised', repeating the connection between confession and materialisation.⁴¹ In summary, the text concludes: 'God's work is finished in us **now**...whatever we take Him to be to us, and thereafter persistently declare is done **now**, is manifested **now**, we shall see fulfilled.'⁴² Taken as a whole, the article characterises faith as an acquisitive act and the immaterial conduit for apprehending that which is complete in the spirit. And positive confession is presented as the mechanism for obtaining the manifestations of such petitions. All of this is in the context of an implied trichotomous anthropology.

Whether she was author or compiler of 'Attitudes of faith', as editor of *Triumphs of Faith* the text may well reflect Montgomery's views. The timing of 'Attitudes of Faith' is significant because, in 1911, Nuzum testified that she gained fresh revelation relating to 'faith that takes', or acquisitive faith, via Montgomery's teaching.⁴³ And thus, Montgomery had already established the views espoused in 'Attitudes of faith' before she began influencing Nuzum on this subject. Therefore, in a similar way to how Montgomery's faith teaching was relayed to Hagin and therefore WoF via Nuzum, Montgomery can once again be seen as a vicarious source of WoF's positive confession teaching via Nuzum.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 107.

⁴² Ibid., 108. Original emphasis retained.

⁴³ Miskov, "Life on Wings," 378.

Moreover, the given cases are examples of Montgomery's positive confession teaching, earlier examples focus on the importance of avoiding negative confession. For example, at least three years earlier than 'The power of praise and testimony', Montgomery was teaching that positive confession represents faith-resistance of the attack of the enemy and that negative confession is giving into self.⁴⁴ Specifically, Montgomery's 'The hearing ear' chapter in *Secrets of Victory* cites an example of the dangers of negative confession at a healing home in England.⁴⁵ For Montgomery, talk of symptoms constituted negative confession that 'prevented' the patient from 'getting hold' or acquiring by faith the divine promise of healing. The solution is to ban talk about such 'bad feelings' in favour of a prescription of the praise cure, which acted as the substance of the patient's pre-manifestation positive confession.

Another example of Montgomery's teaching on the importance of verbal confession is 'The tongue of the wise is health', a *Triumphs of Faith* leading article based on Proverbs 12:18 and designed to communicate 'what a vital relationship our words have to our bodily health, as well as to our spiritual well-being'.⁴⁶ Next comes a testimony of 'Victory through praise' pertaining to the healing of a girl from Malaria and the provision of a house for a family.⁴⁷ And this is followed by a testimony of the miraculous provision of fuel in relation to Mark 11:22.⁴⁸

Furthermore, having warned readers against murmuring – which is generally characterised as gossiping or negative confession – in three chapters of *Secrets of Victory* –

⁴⁴ Montgomery, *Secrets of Victory*, 31.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 31-32. The English healing home in this case is probably the Bethshan healing home of Elizabeth Baxter, where Andrew Murray experienced divine healing. Indeed, Jen Miskov writes: "During Carrie's missionary journey in 1909, she visited Baxter at the Bethshan home. Carrie also had many of Baxter's books in her personal collection...Carrie also published her writings regularly in *Triumphs of Faith*." Cf. Miskov, "Life on Wings," 32.

⁴⁶ Carrie Judd Montgomery, "The Tongue of the Wise Is Health," *Triumphs of Faith* (1916): 73. "Divine healing as related to our tongue" in *Secrets of Victory* follows a similar pattern: *Secrets of Victory*, 48.

⁴⁷ "The Tongue of the Wise Is Health," 77.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 78.

Montgomery explicitly challenges such activities in a chapter dedicated to the subject called ‘Neither murmur ye’.⁴⁹ Having begun by stating that ‘a truly consecrated life is a life of praise, which is distinctly opposite from murmuring’, she furthers the dichotomy between praise and murmuring by adding: ‘The Word tells us that the joy of the Lord is our strength; and we shall be weak in body as well as soul without that joy’.⁵⁰ Montgomery therefore connects praise and joy with physical strength; and gossip and negative confession with physical weakness. From here, Montgomery extends the application of the praise cure concept to include the soul. The context reveals that, for Montgomery, such soul weakness in this instance pertains to ‘feelings of depression’, which she exhorts readers to fight in the same way as physical symptoms – with praise. Ultimately, Montgomery concludes by advocating that ‘the right conversation is PRAISE, and as we praise Him...no matter how dark the pathway...we shall know His fulness of salvation for spirit, soul and body.’⁵¹ Therefore, Montgomery connects negative confession with weakness and positive confession via praise with acquiring God-given physical and emotional strength. All this is set in a trichotomous context and utilises faith as the conduit for the apprehension of Scripture-based promises.

There is evidence that proto-positive confession teaching was present in Nuzum, who Hagin indirectly testifies was formative to his own teaching on the subject. This once again makes Nuzum a key and under-researched source, in this case relating to the initial development of positive confession. Nuzum, in turn, was clearly influenced by Montgomery. Therefore, Christian positive confession teaching did not begin with Hagin or Kenyon as is often suggested.⁵² And rather than Kenyon simply absorbing the principles of Christian

⁴⁹ Montgomery, *Secrets of Victory*, 126-29.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 126.

⁵¹ Ibid., 129. Original emphasis retained.

⁵² McConnell, *The Promise*, 30.

Science and reproducing a more Christianised version in or after 1927 which he then passed onto Hagin,⁵³ a rich and diverse positive confession source base existed for decades before the 1940s. Furthermore, the influence of that source base was initially transmitted to Hagin via Nuzum, but – as in the case of Lillian B. Yeomans – Hagin also engaged with further sources separately to Kenyon. However, those conclusions do not contradict the well-founded argument that Kenyon influenced Hagin subsequently to his engagement with the Nuzum-led pre-existing source base and in parallel with Hagin’s direct interactions with the pre-existing source base.

Mark 11:22-24 – and especially Mark 11:23 – is a common scriptural basis for the belief in positive confession and so its continued importance to the six WoF features examined in this research must be acknowledged. As far as the examined source base is concerned, positive confession teaching generally develops in this order: avoidance of negative confession, praise cure, positive confession. In every case examined, the presence of trichotomy and WoF-esque notions of faith precede or are combined with positive confession teaching. As a result, trichotomy creates the necessary environment for faith teaching and positive confession flows from the platform established by trichotomy and faith.

However, while Hagin was not the source of positive confession, he does appear to have developed it. Repeated themes include the importance of trichotomy, teaching on acquisitive faith and divine faith plus exhortations to avoid negative confession (leaning towards sensory denial) as well as in favour of praise cure and positive confession. There is far less evidence of Hagin’s more comprehensive instruction of what to positively confess. Specifically, evidence of the five key points of positive confession Hagin articulates in *You can have what you say* (see 3.1) have not been identified in the pre-WoF sources. Therefore, it is better to say that the development and distribution of the positive confession doctrine – whether by

⁵³ Ibid.

collation from other sources or via his own creativity – should be attributed to Hagin, rather than its outright creation.

3.2 The Theological Function of Positive Confession

The contextualisation revealed much about the origins and sources of positive confession but has not afforded space for the analysis of how positive confession functions in relation to the other WoF features – which is the purpose of the next section. Since the contextualisation identified a range of pre-Hagin and pre-Kenyon sources of positive confession, these and the section's thematic findings, form the basis of material that will be further examined. As far as the thematic analysis is concerned, examples of positive confession were generally found alongside trichotomy teaching and WoF-compatible readings of faith. Once again, Mark 11 and especially verses 22 and 24 were found to be key Scriptures amongst a range of justifications for such views. WoF-consonant readings of Mark 11:23 acting as a foundation for positive confession doctrine were similarly evident, which means Mark 11:22-24 should once again be analysed in relation to its role as scriptural basis and supportive mechanism for WoF notions of faith and positive confession.

Having found that trichotomy forms an entry point into the WoF system as well an interpretative lens for subsequent readings of Scripture, and since WoF notions of faith issue from such trichotomous understanding and point towards positive confession, the analysis (3.2) must now critically evaluate positive confession's position in relation to the first two features. Additionally, because Mark 11:22-24 provides a continuing interpretative motif, we must also examine the extent to which Mark 11:22-24 runs in parallel and interacts with the initial trichotomy interpretative lens. In other words, WoF appears to be contingent upon a certain anthropology, which runs like a mineral seam throughout the layers of an emerging system. At the same time, faith-orientated readings of Mark 11:22-24 appear to run in parallel

with that anthropological view, with each verse corresponding with a different dimension of the trichotomy. Read that way, Mark 11:22 could refer to the elevation of the human spirit as well as divine faith. And Mark 11:24 could be taken to mean acquisitional faith enacted via physical activity – thereby pertaining to the body. That approach to the passage would leave Mark 11:23 as the remaining association corresponding with the soul. Were that to be the case, not only would it clarify the importance of Mark 11:22-24's role in the emerging network of interconnected features, it would further emphasise the integration of trichotomous anthropology in relation to the other features. Therefore, the theological analysis centres on the application of Mark 11:23 as a proxy for positive confession theology and as a means to interrogate the role of positive confession in relation to the human soul.

The contextualisation further revealed that a range of sources pre-dating Hagin taught earlier versions of the positive confession teaching. Hagin either interacted with these himself or received from them via the likes of Nuzum and Kenyon. All the given examples set positive confession in the context of a trichotomous anthropology. And often they are directly connected with WoF-compatible teaching on faith such as subjective-genitive readings of Mark 11:22 leading to the divine-faith (see 2.2.2) and the acquisitional faith readings of Mark 11:24 (see 2.2.1). Combined, the divine faith and acquisitional faith teachings generate the necessity for a mechanism of manifestation via positive confession and sensory denial – all in order that believers might ‘have what [they] say’.⁵⁴

The function of interconnected features can be seen in terms of interconnected immaterial and material conduits. Due to WoF's trichotomous anthropology, there is a direct connection between the elevated human spirit and the divine. From here, believers are understood to be imparted with the necessary divine faith to obtain the promises of God found in Scripture. The answers to such petitions are received as certain in spiritual terms

⁵⁴ Hagin, *You Can Have What You Say*.

irrespective of whether or not they are visible in the body or understood by the soul.

Therefore, WoF's dual teachings on acquisitive and divine faith act as the immaterial conduit for accessing and acquiring the promises of God. On the other hand, positive confession (and to some extent its corollary, sensory denial), focuses on apparent scriptural promises, acts as a physical conduit for the manifestation of what is acquired by faith. In the same way, faith provides the immaterial conduit between the perceived spiritual reality of reborn human spirit and temporal experience. Positive confession is thus positioned as a bridge between the immaterial (soul and spirit) and temporal manifestation (body). Within the overriding function of the immaterial-material conduit, positive confession plays a number of other subordinate roles interacting within both the immaterial and material conduits. Specifically, positive confession is directly connected to belief in apprehending by faith, growing faith and hastening victory through verbal declaration. Having found that the WoF source base progressively systematises its use of positive confession throughout its history, the analysis engages with further examples of positive confession teaching in order to illustrate this feature's subsequent systematisation.

In line with the concept of acquisitional faith, positive confession functions as the foremost means of apprehending the promises of God. As Nuzum says, to 'take hold' of the strength of God 'while you are weak'.⁵⁵ Likewise, Montgomery characterises verbal prayer and faith affirmations as a way to 'take the answer'.⁵⁶ However, since Mark 11:23 stipulates that the promise of fulfilment relies both on believing and 'not doubting', avoiding unbelief – especially negative confession – becomes almost as important as positive confession. Because the reborn human spirit is elevated to the point of divine faith in WoF, and because the body is characterised as inferior to the immaterial dimensions of the human constitution,

⁵⁵ Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 32.

⁵⁶ Montgomery, "Attitudes of Faith," 108.

the soul is situated at the crossroads of the trichotomy with the responsibility for focusing on faith and avoiding doubt via a process of mind renewal facilitated via positive confession.⁵⁷ With that in mind, Montgomery's approach offers a tool for steering the soul towards divine faith: 'We...bring [the promise] into our consciousness...by declaring over and over again that it is ours already.'⁵⁸ In other words, from its pre-cursors onwards, WoF teaching has sought to resolve the tension between what might be called a faith reality and doubt that the unseen will manifest. Resolution takes place via verbal and mental rehearsal as one aspect of positive confession. Citing the Hebrew *haghah* used in Joshua 1:8, Mike Vidaurri, an inaugural graduate of the Kenneth Copeland Scholar Doctor of ministry programme at United Theological Seminary, writes: 'meditation is not casual contemplation of a thing, it is the active pursuit and rehearsal of the promises God has made to man', which means to verbally 'utter and plot' as 'speaking the Word of God over that blueprint'.⁵⁹ Thus, positive confession is simultaneously characterised as a meditative tool for building faith in general, a way of developing faith for a specific outcome, the result of the grown faith and as a means of bringing the desired outcome into manifestation.

However, the application of positive confession as a meditative tool differs from Hagin's general teaching on petitionary prayer which suggests faith requests should only be made once. Citing Andrew Murray in support of his view that the prayer in Mark 11:24 is a single petition event, Hagin warns 'You could get into doubt and unbelief by asking for the same thing over and over again.'⁶⁰ The apparent contradiction between Hagin's single petition prayer advice and repeated positive confession can be resolved by broadening our understanding of the function of positive confession in line with the kinds of framework

⁵⁷ Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 60, 216.

⁵⁸ Montgomery, "Attitudes of Faith."

⁵⁹ Mike Vidaurri, *Answered Prayer Now!* (Michael Vidaurri Ministries, 2015), 88.

⁶⁰ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Bible Prayer Study Guide* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1991), 188.

taught by Montgomery and also exemplified by Vidaurri. Rather than a specific act of petitionary prayer, positive confession can be seen as a verbal form of meditation designed to strengthen faith and bring the soul into alignment with the spirit by exercising the will and expressed words via the physical speech system. That, in turn, results in the growth and strengthening of one's faith. For example, Nuzum writes that 'Faith becomes stronger as you say you believe'.⁶¹ The understood effect of such a meditative approach and of such growth is the acceleration of manifestation, with Nuzum saying 'Your own mouth can hasten the victory greatly'.⁶²

With the WoF source base variously referring to positive confession as a means of apprehending by faith, growing faith, hastening victory and as itself a meditative tool, a more elegant way of referring to these traits is required. One way to collate these seemingly unwieldy emphases is to return to the trichotomous interpretative lens with which we began and to unify all the functions under the purpose of reordering the trichotomy since the foundation of trichotomy and faith suggests that the restoration of order in the trichotomy results in the divine faith necessary to provide grounds for positive confession.

3.2.1 Speaking spirits: Positive Confession and the Re-alignment of the Trichotomy

Later WoF sources develop and further systematise the function of positive confession beyond the framework of the pre-WoF sources. Building on the work of Kenyon, F. F. Bosworth's 'Our confession' chapter within *Christ the Healer* concisely summarises much of what is taught elsewhere by Kenyon and Hagin on the subject of positive confession.⁶³ Likewise, Bosworth repeats the pattern established with Nuzum and Montgomery of introducing trichotomous anthropology before offering references to Mark 11:24 as a means

⁶¹ Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*, 91.

⁶² Ibid., 64.

⁶³ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 135.

of establishing an acquisitive faith narrative.⁶⁴ ‘Our confession’ follows Bosworth’s ‘Faith that takes’ chapter, which centres on readings of Mark 11:24 that are very similar to Nuzum and Montgomery’s faith teaching (see 2.1.2).⁶⁵ Indeed, two chapters before ‘Faith that takes’ Bosworth directly quotes Cornelia Nuzum in two passages that rely on a trichotomous anthropology and are so overtly acquisitional that they warn ‘Satan is busy trying to take from us what we take from God.’⁶⁶ Not only is that evidence of a system at work, it also heavily utilises its trichotomous anthropology as an interpretative lens.

From here, Bosworth’s most explicit teaching on positive confession in *Christ the Healer* further develops the doctrine towards WoF teaching. Concluding the ‘Our confession’ chapter, Bosworth condenses his understanding of positive confession into a five-step programme: ‘Confess it in your heart first. Confess it out loud in your room. Say it over and over again. Say it until your spirit and your words agree. Say it until your whole being swings into harmony and into line with the Word of God.’⁶⁷ Having established positive confession as both a mental and a verbal meditation tool, as exemplified in the first three sentences of this passage, the last two sentences highlight the compatibility of Bosworth’s teaching with a WoF system. For Bosworth, confession represents both a means and an example of realigning the trichotomy. Specifically, Bosworth teaches believers to positively confess and affirm healing Scriptures ‘until your whole being swings into harmony’, which demonstrates the

⁶⁴ Ibid., 37. Cf. (2.1.3).

⁶⁵ As we saw in (2.1.2), Montgomery and Nuzum’s acquisitive faith emphasis became prominent in 1910 some 14 years before the first edition of Bosworth’s *Christ the Healer* was published in 1924. And, it should be noted, Bosworth quotes Nuzum three times in his “How to receive healing from Christ” chapter. Ibid., 116-18. Taken together, these points suggest that Nuzum was a source of influence on Bosworth.

⁶⁶ Curiously, neither of the two passages Bosworth quotes from Nuzum can be found in Nuzum’s *Life of Faith*. Because *Life of Faith*, was published four years after Bosworth’s *Christ the Healer* in 1928, this means Bosworth was familiar with Nuzum via another source. Since Nuzum only published one book and since the majority of her other articles were published in Montgomery’s *Triumphs of Faith* journal, it appears that Bosworth was also influenced by Nuzum and Montgomery. However, additional research beyond the scope of this thesis could identify the specific sources of the texts Bosworth quotes and answer questions of who influenced who.

⁶⁷ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 142.

anthropological function of positive confession – to re-align the trichotomy.⁶⁸

Bosworth's second quote from Cornelia Nuzum is placed under the sub-heading 'God has already given us all thing [sic]'.⁶⁹ Here, Bosworth introduces Nuzum's exhortation to 'never look to our circumstances and feelings' and thus sensory denial by saying God 'has given us the things that pertain to life and godliness...This includes all we need for spirit, soul, and body...Jesus purchased all this for us. God tells us he *has already* given it to us.'⁷⁰ Taken together with the other examples, Bosworth therefore characterises positive confession as the expression of acquisitive faith, which re-aligns spirit, soul and body in the pre-fall order for the purpose of acquiring and manifesting already-spiritually-obtained healing. In other words, positive confession is characterised as realigning the trichotomy, with the tongue becoming the rudder that – at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, mediated through the human spirit and projected through the language processed in the realm of the soul is physically manifested in the body.

Bosworth readily admits that 'most of the thoughts expressed in this sermon' (the 'Our confession' chapter) are inspired by half a dozen of Kenyon's books, but it is also worth noting that 'Our confession' is actually a condensed version of Bosworth's short book *The Christian Confession*, in which Bosworth expands on Kenyon's understanding. For example, based on the Greek rendered 'confession' in Hebrews 3:1 (*homologeō*), Bosworth teaches that confession means 'say the same thing'.⁷¹ Specifically, for Bosworth, this means say the same thing as God and the Scriptures. As a result of Bosworth's understanding of confession, combined with his trichotomous worldview, he continues: 'Confession is simply believing with our heart and repeating with our lips God's own declaration of what we are and have in

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 117.

⁷⁰ Ibid. Original emphasis.

⁷¹ Ibid., 135.

Christ.’ Here, identity in Christ acts as proxy term for the elevated position of the human spirit that results from the combination of trichotomy and divine faith (see 2.2.2). Confession, then, becomes the means for conveying spiritually existent truth into material experience.

Bosworth further explains ‘confession comes first, and then Jesus our High Priest responds...’.⁷² For Bosworth, this makes Jesus ‘the high priest of our confession’ who ‘acts in our behalf according to what we confess’. Bosworth connects the divine administration of what is confessed in faith with Romans 10:9-10, which illustrates the continued importance of trichotomy as an interpretative lens. According to Bosworth, believing with the heart (which might be read as the human spirit in line with Hagin) attaches the believer to a promise. But verbal confession releases ‘salvation’ or manifestation. The process of claiming, believing and receiving spiritually then manifesting the promises of God via verbal positive confession is ‘the word of faith’ that Paul preached, according to Bosworth.⁷³ Indeed, ‘God’s Word in our heart and in our lips is as effective as when God said, “Let there be light”’, Bosworth explains, comparing the power of the confession of the believer the creation account of Genesis 1.⁷⁴

More recent sources summarise Bosworth’s teaching with the phrase ‘We are speaking spirits’, which appears to have been popularised by Kenneth Copeland based on a particular interpretation of Genesis 2:7.⁷⁵ The ‘speaking spirits’ phrase has also been repeated

⁷² Ibid., 136.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ F. F. Bosworth, *The Christian Confession: How to Obtain All Redemptive Blessings* (Deal, Kent: Deal Pentecostal Church), 15.

⁷⁵ In an interview with *New Wine* magazine, Kenneth Copeland testifies that Derek Prince played a formative role in the development of his positive confession theology: “One of the first real revelations I ever heard in my life was from Derek in a Full Gospel Businessman’s meeting. I had only been saved a short while when I heard Derek preaching, and I’ll never forget what he said: ‘When you speak the Word of God out of your mouth, it is the Word of God, and it has the same authority as when God said, “Let there be light.”’ I’ll never forget that as long as I live. I had never heard anything like that - it really got down to my insides. And it turned out to be the bedrock of this ministry-the Word of God in the mouth of the believer.” Kenneth Copeland, “A Voice of Victory,” *New Wine*, January 1984.

by Copeland's son-in-law George Pearsons and Mark Hankins, amongst others.⁷⁶ Copeland himself cites Rabbi Nosson Sherman as the source of that particular language.⁷⁷ Mark Hankins refers to the same phrase while discussing Genesis 2:7, saying the text is 'better translated' as 'speaking spirit' as opposed to 'living soul', although Hankins doesn't cite the origin of the idiom.⁷⁸ Perhaps the latest example, Vidaurri combines both sources in his prayer manual *Answered prayer now!*, adding: 'Just as God rules over the entire cosmos, so mankind created in the "image" of God is to rule over the earth and its inhabitants.' For Vidaurri, God created humanity in his 'image-maker' as a divine thought prior to his Genesis 1:26 creative declaration of humanity.⁷⁹ And humanity was designed to follow this model as speaking spirits made in the image of God.⁸⁰ However, while Rabbi Scherman's *Chumash* does use the language of 'speaking spirits', it also cites *Targum Onkelos* as its source and suggests Genesis 2:7 depicts God breathing 'a rational soul' and 'intelligent speech' into humanity.⁸¹ *Chumash*'s use of the word soul and its suggestion that God's image in humanity is related to rational intelligence detracts from the WoF emphasis on the human spirit and makes simplistic redeployment of the term 'speaking spirits' in the WoF context problematic. None of the WoF sources that utilise the speaking spirit idiom seek to address or resolve that conflict.

The case of the speaking spirits idiom exemplifies how WoF sources are increasingly reliant on the interpretations of previous generations. Reflecting WoF's prioritisation of the spirit and corresponding anti-intellectualism, the cited WoF sources do not critically evaluate

⁷⁶ George Pearsons, "Words of Faith Words of Life," Eagle Mountain International Church, <https://www.emic.org/blog/words-of-faith-words-of-life/>. Kenneth Copeland, "Partakers of the Heavenly Calling," *Believer's Voice of Victory* 40, no. 10 (2012): 8. Mark Hankins, *The Spirit of Faith*, Fourth ed. (Alexandria, Louisiana: Mark Hankins Ministries, 2007), 218.

⁷⁷ George Pearsons cites Rabbi Nosson Sherman, *The Chumash, Personal Size*, Stone Edition ed. (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publishing Ltd., 1995), 11-12.

⁷⁸ Hankins, *The Spirit of Faith*, 219.

⁷⁹ Vidaurri, *Answered Prayer Now!*, 82-83.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

their interpretations. The result is the creation of a theological echo-chamber.

The Copeland/Pearsons/Hankins/Vidaurre quotation of the *Chumash* exemplifies the problem. With each generation the intensity of the particular WoF interpretation grows, but without commensurate analytical evaluation. The result is that none of the three sources that adopt the language of ‘speaking spirits’ identify *Chumash*’s emphasis on rationality and intelligent language. However, since WoF’s anti-intellectual bias is rooted in its anthropologically modal-leaning trichotomy teaching, adopting the triunity approach suggested at the conclusion of chapter 1 offers a solution by emphasising the wholeness of spirit, soul and body. Should the role of the Holy Spirit-restored rational soul be re-integrated into the whole, interpretative weaknesses such as the *Chumash* example could be identified and corrected and new approaches and understanding could be introduced.

Whatever the strength or provenance of the speaking spirit idiom, its appropriation by the WoF movement is a result of the theological trajectory rooted in the prioritisation of the human spirit that comes via the combination of trichotomous anthropology and WoF readings of Mark 11:22. Such readings are then paired with scriptural injunctions to speak out in faith such as Mark 11:23 and 2 Corinthians 4:13. Likewise, we may also conclude that WoF’s ‘confession is faith’s way of expressing itself’ teaching and the suggestion that ‘Jesus is the high priest of our confession’ result from the interpretive framework established by the preceding features.⁸² In other words, positive confession is the theological product of conceptual foundations of trichotomy and faith and functions as a means of attaining faith as well as manifesting the results of petitionary claims.

⁸² Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 139. *The Christian Confession: How to Obtain All Redemptive Blessings*, 2.

3.2.2 Positive Confession and Mark 11:23

Having analysed positive confession's provenance, meaning and development, we can now further examine the WoF movement's use of Mark 11 and specifically Mark 11:23 as it pertains to positive confession as well as trichotomy and faith as a means of analysing the interconnected nature of faith and positive confession. In order to do this, we begin by returning to Kenneth Hagin's writings as the central source of the movement's teaching.

In Hagin's words, 'The God-kind of faith is the same faith that believes and speaks'.⁸³ Thus Hagin directly connects his readings of Mark 11:22 and verse 24 and also attaches them to his understanding of 2 Corinthians 4:13. That, in turn, suggests Hagin's reading follows a similar approach to Bosworth's usage of Romans 10:9-10, (see 3.2.1). Continuing, Hagin adds: 'In verses 23 and 24, Jesus defines and describes for us the God-kind of faith He spoke about in verse 22. The God-kind of faith is the kind of faith whereby a man believes in his heart and says with his mouth what he believes in his heart.'⁸⁴ Here, Hagin himself implies that Mark 11:22-24 are systematic by adding that verses 23 and 24 represent the outworking of Mark 11:22. Furthermore, Hagin's final clause highlights the apparent importance of trichotomous alignment by suggesting believers must believe and – avoiding negative confession – speak what they believe in the heart or human spirit.

Mark Hankins develops Hagin's teaching, beginning by paraphrasing his spiritual forefather: 'Jesus described the power of the God kind of faith in Mark 11:23'.⁸⁵ Later Hankins adds that in Mark 11:23 Jesus explained 'exactly how the God kind of faith works'.⁸⁶ He returns to Mark 11:23 a third time to discuss his understanding of the significance of the Greek words for 'say' in the verse,⁸⁷ before revisiting Mark 11:23 on a

⁸³ Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 160.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Hankins, *The Spirit of Faith*, 34.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 199.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 222.

fourth occasion to reaffirm the importance of the passage as it pertains to WoF: ‘Jesus was talking about faith in verse 22, how to release your faith in your saying verse 23, and how to release your faith in your praying in verse 24...’⁸⁸

Hagin and Hankin’s repeated returns to Mark 11 and specifically verse 23 emphasise the continuing importance of this passage to all three WoF features examined so far and to positive confession in particular. Both Hagin and Hankins read Mark 11:22-24 as systematic and as pertaining to both acquisitive and divine faith. However, there is some variation when it comes to their description of the meaning of each verse. While Hagin favours a reading more closely associated with the trichotomous interpretative lens, Hankins reads all three verses through a faith-based interpretative lens. The two approaches are not mutually exclusive, but they do represent different emphases. These examples also indicate how faith, like trichotomy, is itself deployed as an interpretative lens. In addition, the repeated and interconnected usage of Mark 11:22-24 itself acts an interpretative lens – as exemplified by Kenyon and Bosworth’s novel interpretation of Hebrews 4:13. Meanwhile, Hankins’ delineation between ‘your saying verse 23’ and ‘your praying in verse 24’ supports the suggestion that WoF treats positive confession and prayer differently. In doing so, Hankins positions positive confession as a verbal meditation tool designed to build the faith necessary to pray according to his reading of Mark 11:24. But since verse 24 directly connects the ‘say’ of verse 23 with the ‘pray’ of verse 24, the passage does not allow a rigid dichotomy between prayer and confession.

Conclusion

WoF readings of Mark 11:22 and Mark 11:24, built on the foundation of the movement’s particular trichotomous anthropology and its accompanying interpretative lens, represent the

⁸⁸ Ibid., 264.

beginnings of a theological system (see Chapters 1 and 2). WoF readings of Mark 11:23 further that trajectory. Indeed, the movement's readings of Mark 11:23 are the result of what has been established by its approach to Mark 11:22-24 via the trichotomous interpretative lens. Such readings result in the verbal expressions of faith known as positive confession. Seen anthropologically, positive confession emerges from trichotomy and faith because WoF's trichotomy teaching emphasises the complete rebirth of the human spirit, but only a progressive rebirth of the soul and body. In order for the outworking of what has been achieved spiritually to be experienced in the temporal realm, a mechanism for manifesting such spiritual concepts is therefore required. Positive confession is that mechanism.

Specifically, positive confession can be described as a product of the re-birth of the human spirit, an act of faith, a meditative tool for developing faith and means of acquiring the petitioned outcome spiritually as well as hastening its manifestation materially. And because positive confession prioritises spiritually acquired realities over temporal symptoms, sensory denial is an inevitable result on occasions where instant manifestation is not forthcoming. From an anthropological point of view, positive confession results in the re-alignment of the trichotomy thereby accessing the pre-lapsarian position of humanity as the speaking spirits WoF finds in Genesis 2:7, but which were lost in the fall.

However, positive confession is not without its theological problems. Use of the term speaking spirits to describe humanity is one such example. WoF's positive confession teaching has become progressively more systematic as generations pass, but without an accompanying increase in critical evaluation. While that problem is rooted in the hierarchical nature of the movement's trichotomous anthropology, the tension can be addressed by emphasising wholeness or triunity as opposed to anthropological modalism and its inherent problems.

Returning to wholeness as opposed to hierarchy in this way means we need not

dispatch with positive confession's trichotomous anthropology or the positive confession teaching altogether. Rather, both need to be reframed. As I suggested at the conclusion of the first chapter (see 1), instead of relying on the redemption-as-realignment thinking of WoF trichotomy and its resultant elevation of the human spirit, refocusing on the triunity of the three dimensions of the human constitution allows for the ministry of the Holy Spirit – whether via the human spirit or not – to the whole person. Thus, the “have what you say” process engages all three dimensions of the human without the problems associated with hierarchy and any consequential modalising tendencies. At the same time, such a view opens the possibility of a broader understanding of ‘say’ beyond vocalisation. Seen this way, ‘say’ can be taken to mean faith and corresponding action. Or, to paraphrase 2 Corinthians 4:13, rather than believe and therefore speak, believe and therefore write or believe and therefore act as opposed to an exclusive reliance on speech alone. Both writing and action equally achieve the aim of unifying the whole person as opposed to the problematic view of prioritising the human spirit and soul and body alignment with it.

Similarly, WoF theology would benefit from revisiting its own reading of its framework. By broadening its understanding of trichotomy towards one of triunity, rather than emphasising the human spirit at the expense of the intellect and rationality, the renewal of the spirit could benefit all three dimensions. At the same time, the movement would benefit from re-reading its own increasingly identifiable source base. Chapters 1 to 3 repeatedly identified two generations of sources for the theological material found in Hagin. For example, the writings of Nuzum and Dowie were repeatedly found in Hagin's work (see 2.1.2, 2.1.3 and 1.1.2 respectively), with Montgomery shown to be an important source for Nuzum, (see 1.1.2 and 1.1.3). Similarly, Kenyon is an undisputed source of theological material for Hagin and Bosworth's work can be seen in Kenyon's publications. Taken together, these examples demonstrate the likelihood that WoF draws on two generations of

early-Pentecostal and pre-Pentecostal antecedents.

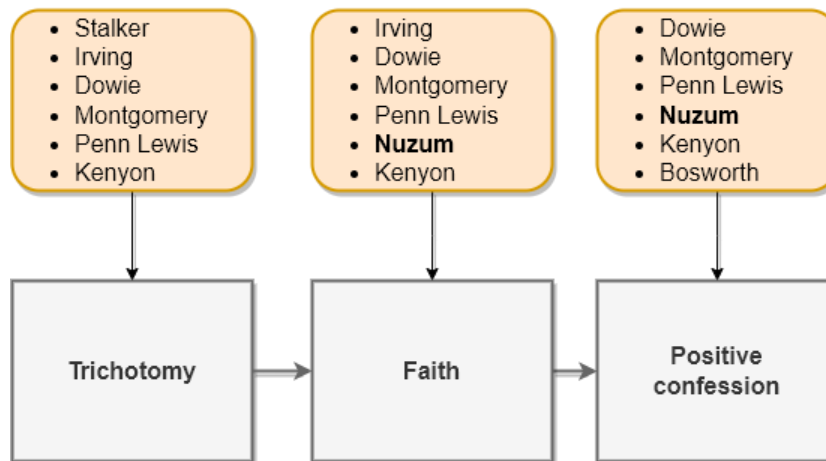


Figure 5 – An initial summary of WoF sources

By re-reading of its own source base, WoF adherents could critically evaluate the increasingly rigidly systematised contemporary iterations of its theology with greater breadth, depth and nuance. To give a specific example, if WoF theology did not exalt the human spirit as essentially superior, the movement's speaking spirit idiom could be reimagined in light of the rationality and intellectual emphasis given by its own source (*Chumash*) as well as the movement's spiritual understanding (see 3.2.1). Likewise, unstable interpretations such as Bosworth's 'high priest of our confession' reading of Hebrews 3:1 could be revisited and revised. Thus, the meditative and faith-building qualities of positive confession are retained and even enhanced via the addition of conscious and rational reflection of Scripture as well as spiritual encounter.

In conclusion, the trichotomy-divine-faith combination leads to the belief that believers can be referred to as speaking spirits, humans who positively confesses. Such speech necessarily issues from the first two features in the system. However, since the human soul is not as completely renewed as the human spirit post conversion, according to the WoF view, the mind (soul) must be renewed and the necessary faith must be developed via positive

confession. Therefore, positive confession functions both as a meditative tool for developing the necessary faith and as the physical means of expression. To this end, positive confession acts as the physical conduit connecting an immaterial promise claimed spiritually with the material world.

Faith, trichotomy and positive confession can be summarised via the movement's reading of its central passage, Mark 11:22-24, with Mark 11:22 representing the trichotomy-divine faith combination, Mark 11:24 representing acquisitive faith and Mark 11:23 connecting the two. Put another way, Mark 11:22 establishes the foundations of the faith system in the spiritual dimension, verse 23 pertains to the soul and verse 24, the body. Thus Mark 11:22-24 read through the trichotomy-shaped interpretative lens continues to be a key hermeneutical tool.

Taken together, trichotomy and faith represent the entry point and underpinnings of WoF theology, while positive confession acts a conduit connecting those immaterial beliefs with the material world. Those three features combined represent an immaterial phase in what appears to be an emerging system, but any such system is incomplete without some reference to the material outcomes attached to those features. As a result, we now progress towards questions of manifestation. Because healing is generally one of the foremost characteristics attached to WoF – which is sometimes pejoratively known as health and wealth teaching; and because most of the examples cited in this chapter are either testimonies of or declarations of physical healing as a primary outworking of the thus-far invisible theological system, the next chapter focuses on WoF understanding of divine healing as well as its place and function in the emerging theological system.

CHAPTER 4: HEALING

Just as divine physical healing has always been a core Pentecostal belief, healing plays such a key role in WoF that one of the movement's alternative monikers compresses WoF theology into two words: health and wealth. Taken together, the preceding chapters found that trichotomy, faith and positive confession represent the immaterial phase of a system. However, the primary material products or outputs of the trichotomy, faith and positive confession combination – namely, healing and prosperity – have so far received scant attention. This chapter addresses that deficit and continues the quest to contextualise and critically analyse WoF theology's interconnected features by focusing on the subject of divine healing. In short, in this chapter I argue that WoF healing theology issues from its theological history, interfaces with trichotomy, faith and positive confession while emphasising redemption and atonement narratives in a manner broad enough to be re-applied to material outcomes other than physical healing.

Typically, research analysing WoF focuses on healing or prosperity.¹ Centring healing and prosperity is understandable since they are two of the most prominent material outcomes sought by WoF adherents and teachers. However, WoF healing does not exist in isolation either historically or theologically. Rather, the movement's understanding of healing is reliant on the precedents of its spiritual forebears and on the theological framework established by the preceding features in the system.

Chapter 1 found that trichotomy provides the necessary anthropological entry point into the WoF system as well as support for the movement's particular notions of faith, which – as Hagin and the movement regularly repeat – must precede manifestation (see Chapter 2). With the immaterial basis of the system (trichotomy and faith) established, positive

¹ For example: David Petts, "Healing and the Atonement," (University of Nottingham, 1993). And Hejzlar, *Two Paradigms for Divine Healing*. See also: Bowler, *Blessed*; Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*.

confession acts as a crucial bridge between the immaterial phase and a second desired-material-outcomes phase, which includes divine healing. Consequently, this augmentative chapter re-reads WoF teaching on divine healing in its historical context, before analysing the theological function of divine healing in relation to trichotomy, faith and positive confession.

The first section surveys Kenneth Hagin's writings in order to examine the most explicit sources of influence and inspiration for WoF's understanding of divine healing. Primarily, this means the work of F. F. Bosworth, P. C. Nelson and T. J. McCrossan because those sources are the most overtly referenced in Hagin's work. Kenyon's influence on Hagin is not examined for two reasons: First, because works such as D. R. McConnell's *The Promise of Health and Wealth* and others based on McConnell's book address Kenyon's influence on Hagin in detail;² and secondly because, while Kenyon's influence follows that of Bosworth, Nelson and McCrossan historically, the earlier group of healing sources has received comparatively less attention in terms of secondary source analysis even though examining the earlier sources is better-placed to reveal the foundations of WoF's theology of healing. My re-reading continues by examining the earlier healing sources in light of trichotomy, faith and positive confession.

The second section critically analyses the theological function of divine healing in WoF by analysing how divine healing functions in relation to trichotomy, faith and positive confession (see 4.2.1). The analysis continues with a critical examination of WoF understanding of the atonement (see 4.2.2), with particular attention paid to language WoF sources use relating to various atonement theories (see 4.2.2.1) and the movement's handling of prepositions in relation to its doctrine of identification (see 4.2.2.2). The section concludes with an examination of the theological impact of WoF combination of trichotomy and divine healing doctrines.

² McConnell, *The Promise*.

4.1 Divine Healing in Word of Faith Context

Kenneth Hagin Snr.'s initial experience of healing from an incurable heart condition is central to his conversion to Christianity and provides the basis for Hagin's understanding of divine healing. At the same time, Hagin's initial experience of healing represents a Rosetta stone for understanding both WoF healing as well as its evolution, with references to Hagin's miraculous healing featuring in virtually everything he published on the subject. As Hagin's understanding grew with time, so his testimony evolved. Indeed, Hagin regularly refers back to his original healing experience as an example of what he subsequently learns.³ As we have seen in the previous chapters on faith and positive confession, WoF healing is repeatedly connected with concepts of acquisitive faith and positive confession.⁴ Such examples and similar cases are worth revisiting because, while my research has considered some of them from the perspectives of trichotomy, faith and positive confession, so far I have not scrutinised their relation to healing to the same degree.

4.1.1 Hermeneutics: How Hagin Interprets Scripture in Relation to Atonement Healing via His Source Base

When it comes to healing, we encounter a particular hermeneutical choice that differs from the treatment of the other features examined in the preceding chapters. Specifically, Kenneth E. Hagin's re-publication and citation of T. J. McCrossan as well as his reliance on F. F. Bosworth and P. C. Nelson demonstrate a far greater use of original biblical language-based argumentation than he does in relation to trichotomy, faith and positive confession.⁵ In addition, Hagin's usage of McCrossan especially (but Bosworth and Nelson also) demonstrates significantly greater engagement with secondary sources, which themselves

³ For example: Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course*, 21-22.

⁴ See chapters 2 and 3 on Faith and Positive Confession.

⁵ See 4.1.2

engage with their contemporary academic corpus. When it comes to key atonement healing Scriptures such as Isaiah 53:3-6, Matthew 8:17 and 1 Peter 2:24, Hagin's healing sources seek to identify the authorial intent behind the Scriptures and they use linguistic arguments to make their points.⁶ In other words, Hagin's healing source base utilises historical-grammatical hermeneutical approaches.

At the same time, the same works, as well as the sources they cite – specifically A. J. Gordon's *Ministry of Healing* – also argue in favour of atonement-based healing using historical arguments to demonstrate the continuance of divine healing throughout the ages.⁷ Simultaneously, the group also argue in favour of the continuance of divine healing on the grounds that various sources throughout church history have adhered to such beliefs on scriptural grounds, which is indicative of a reception history approach.⁸

McCrossan, Nelson and Bosworth (along with Hagin) are also keen to share personal and secondary testimonies of healing in their writing.⁹ Such experiential arguments for interpreting Scripture in support of atonement healing readings do not represent examples of either historical-grammatical or reception history approaches but are probably best described in terms of reader-response.¹⁰

Across the atonement healing source base, as well as in Hagin's writing, we find examples of all three approaches side-by-side. And therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the WoF movement inherited a tradition of methodological confluence from its Healing

⁶ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 31-37. T. J. McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement* (Seattle, Washington: T.J. McCrossan, 1930), 17-20. P. C. Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted* (Wichita, Kansas 1921), 21, 29.

⁷ *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 9-11. McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 66-69. Bosworth uses the least historical argumentation, but when he does so he cites the considerable historical arguments of A. J. Gordon: Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 36.

⁸ See: Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing*, 65. Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 10-11. Cf. 4.1.2. McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 67-68.

⁹ Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 54-61. Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 205-29. McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 69-71.

¹⁰ Craig S. Keener, *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost* (2016), 86, 121.

Movement and early Pentecostal sources via Hagin. However, when it comes to atonement healing, Hagin's sources are more inclined to deploy historical-grammatical methods than in relation to trichotomy, faith and positive confession.¹¹ One explanation is that WoF's atonement healing rationale is more reliant on sources that emphasised historical-grammatical methodology. Indeed, since Hagin himself has no expertise in the biblical languages, he relies on T. J. McCrossan, P. C. Nelson and to a lesser extent F. F. Bosworth for his understanding of the original languages as well as for support for his readings.

At the same time, Hagin's editorial choices reveal that he selected Bosworth, McCrossan and Nelson because their work is compatible with the interpretative lenses through which he views divine healing, namely those provided by trichotomy and faith, reinforced and actuated by positive confession.

In contrast with his inexperience with the historical-grammatical approach, Hagin himself demonstrates a kind of selective reception history. Hagin chooses sources and even particular anecdotes to fit with his evolving system rather than more thoroughly engaging with, accepting or developing the arguments of his original sources. The selectivity of Hagin's approach is reflected in his decision not to include either McCrossan's appreciation of anti-atonement healing sources or McCrossan's criticism of 'falling in the Spirit', which was present in the original 1930s edition of *Bodily Healing in the Atonement* but was omitted in the later Hagin and Hicks edition.¹²

Hagin is similarly inflexible when it comes to Biblical Scriptures, espousing a particularly narrow canon-within-the-canon concept. First, Hagin explains how, in his initial healing experience at the age of 15, he reasoned that 'the New [Testament] must take the place of the

¹¹ Where such tools for close reading of the original languages may have proved helpful (see 1.2.2.2).

¹² Compare the original and Hagin and Hicks editions McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 108.

Old [Testament]’.¹³ Then, he advises Christians: ‘Let your diet be mainly made up of the Epistles or the Letters’ as an example of ‘the right diet’, adding ‘I’ve spent 90% of my study of the Word of God here.’¹⁴ In other words, Hagin advocates that Christian devotional Bible study should almost exclusively centre on the New Testament letters rather than the Gospels and the Old Testament. One example of the effect of such an approach is that Hagin reads Acts through his own reading of Paul’s letters, suggesting Paul made ‘three positive confessions.’¹⁵ Or, to put it another way, Hagin reads the Bible as a whole through his interpretation of the New Testament letters, which are themselves specifically informed by Hagin’s initial acquisitional faith healing experience as a 15-year-old and associated WoF features.

Considering the high degree of personalisation of biblical promises with the expectation of physical manifestation in one’s personal life, reader-response could be a better way of describing WoF’s interpretative apparatus.¹⁶ However, a belief framework based on the acquisition by faith of scriptural promises needs a way of obtaining some kind of original meaning of a text, an emphasis on authorial intent that reader-response approaches find themselves in tension with. Therefore, WoF simultaneously seeks the certainty of apparent objectivity, but also the personalisation and individual application of the same texts. As Bosworth, Nelson and McCrossan exemplify, one resolution to the aforementioned hermeneutical problems is to deploy all three approaches, though different, at the same time. This way, historical critical methods help establish textual grounds, reception history contextualises these within the life of adherents and reader-response helps personalise and deploy the same teaching into specific contexts.

¹³ Hagin, *Growing up, Spiritually*, 143.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ “I like that fellow Paul. He made three *positive confessions*: ‘I belong to God. I serve God. I believe God.’ And that’s what caused him to rise.” *Ibid.*, 105. Emphasis added.

¹⁶ Keener, *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost*, 86, 121.

However, reception history is probably Hagin's preferred, if unconscious, approach, based on the prevalence of Hagin's own initial and subsequent personal healing testimonies in his teaching. At the same time, Hagin repeatedly uses references to pre- and early-Pentecostal leaders in support of his various teaching points in relation to Trichotomy and Faith. With that preference in mind, another way of addressing inconsistencies and weaknesses in WoF theology is to further revisit the movement's reception history and especially the wider context relating to its most cited as well as its un-cited sources. By uncovering and re-visiting its own source base, WoF has the opportunity to critically evaluate the degree to which contemporary teaching is consonant with a) the text as portrayed by the WoF sources, which themselves use a combined hermeneutic; and b) their own teaching including correctives such as Hagin's *The Midas Touch*.¹⁷

4.1.2 Word of Faith Divine Healing Origins: Issuing from the Confluence of Preceding Streams

Hagin testifies that one aspect of his healing method was personally delivered to him by Jesus in a vision,¹⁸ but his theology of divine healing did not arrive in a historical vacuum. Rather, Hagin refers to divine healing as part of his and the WoF movement's understanding of the 'full gospel', a phrase that grounds the movement in the wider context of Pentecostalism.¹⁹ Therefore, the contextualisation now considers the origins of the WoF's claims to a Pentecostal heritage.

Addressing the subject directly, Hagin attributed his understanding of divine healing to

¹⁷ Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Midas Touch: A Balanced Approach to Biblical Prosperity* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 2000).

¹⁸ *I Believe in Visions*, 54-55.

¹⁹ For examples of Kenneth Hagin's usage of the term "full-gospel" in relation to divine healing, see: *Healing Belongs to Us*, Second printing, (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1985), 6. Kenneth E. Hagin, *A Better Covenant* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1981), 6, 15. *Bible Faith Study Course*, 8, 28. *Bible Prayer Study Guide*, 12, 53.

classical North American Pentecostal roots: ‘all I know about faith and *healing* I learned from the Assemblies of God’.²⁰ However, Hagin also regularly cites a range of Pentecostal and pre-Pentecostal healing sources including John Alexander Dowie, John G. Lake, Lillian B. Yeomans, P. C. Nelson and F. F. Bosworth.²¹ In addition, the un-cited influence of other sources such as Cornelia Nuzum is also evident.²² With that initial source list in mind, and in light of Hagin’s tendency to draw from a range of sources, the contextualisation begins by conducting a thematic analysis of some of Hagin’s most overtly healing-orientated writing in order to better define WoF understanding of divine healing as well as to identify its theological underpinnings and interconnections.

Kenneth E. Hagin’s own healing experience became the subject of his testimony in the 1930s when he recovered from an apparently incurable heart condition by claiming healing on the basis of Mark 11:22-24 irrespective of physical evidence of healing. That was, as we saw in Chapter 2, around the same time Hagin also read Nuzum’s *Life of Faith*.²³ The foreword to Hagin’s republished edition of *Bodily Healing and the Atonement* further implies that Hagin owned a copy of author T. J. McCrossan’s original version, which was published in 1930, some decades prior to Hagin’s re-issue of McCrossan’s book.²⁴

²⁰ Emphasis added. Eddie Hyatt, "Have We Misjudged the Word-Faith Movement?," Strang Publications, <http://ministrytodaymag.com/index.php/ministry-news/columns/217-columns-index/11390-have-we-misjudged-the-word-faith-movement>. Decades after Hagin Snr’s testimony in the 1930s and his pastoring under Baptist and Assemblies of God denominations, in 1967 Kenneth W Hagin was also ordained in the Assemblies of God, illustrating some interconnections between the Assemblies of God and the WoF movement. Hagin Jnr.’s ordination came after Hagin Snr. senior had long since begun his itinerant ministry and just seven years before the foundation of Rhema Bible Training Center in 1974. Cf. Thomas F. Zimmerman, "Assemblies of God USA Membership Letter," (Assemblies of God, 1967).

²¹ See (2.1.1 to 2.1.4) and Kenneth E. Hagin, *Bible Healing Study Course* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1999), 202. FF Bosworth’s writing likewise remains recommended reading at Hagin’s Rhema Bible Training Centre. See *The Name of Jesus*. Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*. Cf. Roscoe Barnes III, "F.F. Bosworth and the Role of Women in His Life and Ministry," *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 27:1 (2007).

²² See (2.1.1).

²³ Brim, *The Blood and Glory*, 14.

²⁴ T.J. McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 3rd printing, 2nd ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1989), 5. It is not clear when Hagin owned that book, but it must have been many years before Hagin and Hicks’ republished edition in the 1980s and it is reasonable to conclude that *Bodily Healing and the Atonement* was also a relatively early source of Hagin’s own teaching.

From Hagin Snr.'s account of his own initial healing to books such a *Healing belongs to us* as well as the prevalence of healing as a clear example of the application of faith, divine physical healing has become a core part of his and the movement's understanding of the "full gospel" and is similarly inextricable from Hagin's faith teaching.²⁵ The centrality of divine healing is exemplified in a later-life reflection on his healing testimony published in 1992, 11 years before Hagin's death:

When you see your-self with the answer based on God's Word...failing to take God's medicine – His Word – according to instructions is what defeats so many folks in their prayer life. Notice all of that agrees with what Jesus says in Mark 11:24...²⁶

Thus Hagin reports that the acquisitional faith he learnt from Mark 11:24,²⁷ combined with a meditative positive confession element is what made his petitions efficacious.²⁸ Such examples support the hypothesis that WoF is a system of interconnected beliefs since they combine implied references to trichotomy (and the resultant notion of being already-healed spiritually); divine and acquisitional faith (in relation to taking 'God's medicine'); all in the context of Hagin's Nuzum-inspired reading of Mark 11:24. Considering the features examined so far,²⁹ we can expect healing to be seen as a spiritual reality that needs to be apprehended and manifested.

Working backwards from his later healing works, the most overt example of Hagin's already-healed, acquisitional-faith healing teaching can be found in *Healing belongs to us* (1985). Published in the second half of his life and therefore several decades after his initial

²⁵ For examples of Kenneth Hagin's usage of the term "full-gospel" in relation to divine healing, see: Hagin, *Healing Belongs to Us*, 6. Hagin, *A Better Covenant*, 6, 15. *Bible Faith Study Course*, 8, 28. *Bible Prayer Study Guide*, 12, 53.

²⁶ *Bible Faith Study Course*, 21-22.

²⁷ Probably from Cornelia Nuzum, see Chapter 2.

²⁸ See 3.2.

²⁹ Namely Trichotomy, (WoF notions of) Faith and Positive Confession (see chapters 1, 2 and 3).

healing experience, *Healing belongs to us* reveals further details of Hagin's underlying healing theology and specifically that he differentiates between what he calls supernatural healing and faith healing. At the same time, it demonstrates how Hagin's initial Mark 11:24-based acquisitional faith impetus became more systematised over time. Indeed, Hagin goes as far as to define different modes of divine healing: 'We need to distinguish between healings obtained through supernatural gifts or manifestations and those obtained by exercising faith in God's Word alone...an individual does not operate these supernatural gifts; they are manifested through him', with Hagin adding: 'I can only stay open for the manifestation of the Spirit of God as He wills.'³⁰ By drawing such distinctions, Hagin positions supernatural, or what might be better referred to as pneumatic divine healing, as surprisingly subject to divine sovereignty and non-normative. In contrast, appropriation of healing by faith is said to be normative in Christian life. While one might expect a Pentecostal to view divine healing largely pneumatologically, Hagin's distinctions illustrate the diversity of his own spiritual heritage and are likely to be a reflection of his Southern Baptist roots combined with his Full-Gospel, Pentecostal experiences.

Hagin testifies to operating in both the pneumatic and faith healing modes identified, but teaches that faith is the primary way believers should seek healing, arguing: '...gifts of healings...are given primarily to advertise the Gospel and to gain the attention of those outside the Church. The believer should be healed by releasing his faith in the Word of God.'³¹

By suggesting that pneumatic miracles generally happen in missional contexts, Hagin exhibits a kind of modified dispensational thinking allowing missional exceptions to general

³⁰ Hagin, *Healing Belongs to Us*, 6. Hagin similarly refers to the streams of prayer and anointing in parallel terms, see: *Bible Healing Study Course*, 22-23.

³¹ *Healing Belongs to Us*, 6.

dispensational reluctance towards spiritual gifts.³² Hagin simultaneously continues in the vein of pre- and early-Pentecostal healing movement figures, such as Carrie Judd Montgomery, Alexander Dowie as well as Cornelia Nuzum and F. F. Bosworth by providing a Scripture-and-faith-based argument for faith healing virtually on demand. Since Hagin viewed divine healing by faith as normative, that particular mode of divine healing is the focus of this chapter.

Later in *Healing belongs to us*, Hagin shares the testimony of how one believer received healing from a malignant facial cancer: ‘I told her, “According to the Word, it is healed. Go to bed saying it. Get up saying it. Say it sweeping the floor. Say it washing the dishes. Say it every time you think of it. I feel led of the Lord to tell you to do this for ten days.”’³³ This case is an example of the practice of positive confession as a meditative tool designed to renew the mind to the understood already-healed status of the reborn human spirit (see 3.2). Here, confession acts as a means of aligning the immaterial faith conduit and the physical positive confession conduit in order for the candidate to receive manifestation of healing. Next, Hagin adds that the woman involved should confess her healing repeatedly for 10 days, subject to the proviso that such an activity should be Holy Spirit-led. The addition of such a pneumatic dimension to this example of healing by faith is a noteworthy detail since it fuses pneumatic healing with what Hagin says is normative – the healing-by-faith teaching. Reading this through Hagin’s trichotomous interpretative lens, the outcome is that healing manifestation is enacted when one’s soul is aligned with one’s spirit and, via the renewed human spirit, with the Holy Spirit. It is in the context of the properly aligned trichotomy – actioned by repeated positive confession – that what Hagin refers to as supernatural healing flows.

³² Hagin’s *Bible Prayer* study course provides an example of Hagin’s dispensational thinking: *Bible Prayer Study Guide*, 46, 49, 91, 141, 68, 201.

³³ *Healing Belongs to Us*, 31.

For Hagin, ‘Healing is primarily a faith proposition on the part of the individual who receives. No matter how much faith the minister may have, the effects of the individual’s doubt will nullify the minister’s faith.’³⁴ And because the onus is primarily on the believer to acquire, believe and receive healing by faith, the minister’s primary role is to proclaim the WoF interpretation of Scripture and train the believer in their part. According to Hagin, ‘The Key to Scriptural healing’, indeed ‘God’s recipe for healing’, is to focus on God’s word and ‘Consider Him’ above circumstances and symptoms.³⁵

At the same time, there is an implicit emphasis on mind renewal via Bible study and positive confession. For example, when asked what he does when he feels physically unwell, Hagin answers: ‘I always double up on my Bible reading...His Word will heal you.’³⁶ Hagin’s rationale – that increased Bible study will strengthen his human spirit and produce healing in his body – exposes the latent influence of his trichotomous theology and specifically his habit of using terms relating to the human spirit and the heart interchangeably (see 1.2.2.2):

It starts in your heart; in your spirit. God heals you through your spirit. God is a Spirit. God can only contact us through our spirits. We can only contact God through our spirits.³⁷

Hagin’s capitalisation choices illustrate WoF belief regarding the manifestation of divine healing.³⁸ Specifically, Hagin believes Galatians 5:22 refers to fruit of the human spirit,³⁹ Hagin likewise believes healing flows via the human spirit, reasoning that God is

³⁴ *The Key to Scriptural Healing*, 1995, Fourteenth printing, 2nd ed. (Tulsa: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1983), 13.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 31. While this is an admonition towards sensory denial, considering that Hagin sets his exhortations to “Consider Him” in the context of Hebrew 3:1, there is a surprising lack of general positive confession emphasis and specifically Bosworth’s high-priest-of-our-confession teaching in this instance.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Once again, Hagin’s use of capitalisation demonstrates how his particular trichotomous anthropology influences his interpretation of Scripture. See also (1.2.2.2).

³⁹ See 1.2.2.2. Cf. Hagin, *Growing up, Spiritually*, 153.

spirit and that such an ontological insight necessitates a comparably spiritual interaction.⁴⁰ As a result, Hagin advances the human spirit as the only viable point of contact with God. Emphasising that ‘God is a Spirit’ illustrates WoF trichotomy’s prioritisation of the human spirit based on its apparently unique proximity to God. And since there is a degree of hierarchy in WoF anthropology, which prioritises the human spirit above the soul and the body,⁴¹ WoF healing is understood to cascade from the human spirit to the soul and body.

4.1.3 Healing in the Atonement

Hagin’s theology of divine healing is a product of the combination of his trichotomous anthropology and his faith teaching along with their resultant positive confession doctrine. But at the same time, while Hagin’s interpretation resists strict systematic labels, he grounds physical healing in his view of substitutionary atonement: ‘...the child of God receives healing for his physical body on the same grounds that he receives the remission of sin for his spirit’, the same grounds being as a result of specifically substitutionary atonement.⁴² The suggestion that the atonement provides healing for the physical body and remission of sin for the spirit is a function of Hagin’s trichotomous anthropology. Referring to the different dimensions of the human constitution (body and spirit) in such a fashion has the effect of deconstructing and potentially even modalising WoF’s trichotomous anthropology. At the same time, positioning healing as a legal right of the believer continues to reveal WoF’s belief that healing is complete irrespective of the degree to which it manifests. Or, to put it another way, it is portrayed as a truth that requires manifestation rather than a possibility.

⁴⁰ “...God contacts us through our spirit, not through our mind or body—because, as we said, God is not a mind. Likewise, He is not a man (Num. 23:19). Although He has a spirit-body over in the spirit world – angels do too – God is not a physical being. He is a spirit. Therefore, He contacts us through our spirit, just as we contact Him through our spirit.” Hagin, *Bible Healing Study Course*, 80.

⁴¹ See (1.1.1).

⁴² Kenneth E. Hagin, *Health Food Devotions*, Paperback 2007 ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 2002), 339. See also: *Bible Healing Study Course*, 14-15; 37-41; 47; 60-61; 76-77.

Furthermore, the language of legal rights illustrates the influence of penal substitutionary atonement views on Hagin's understanding of physical healing.

In WoF's promise-based Scripture reading culture, such a strong emphasis on penal substitutionary atonement as the grounds for physical healing requires a biblical basis. For Hagin, 'the 53rd chapter of Isaiah holds the key to both our spiritual and physical redemption'.⁴³ Hagin's argument is that pre-Pentecostal Christians emphasised Isaiah 53:6 ('the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all') to the exclusion of Isaiah 53:4 ('surely he hath borne our griefs [sicknesses, diseases]').⁴⁴ Hagin bases his view in the work of early Pentecostal and pre-Pentecostal sources. Writing in the foreword of the edited version of T. J. McCrossan's 1930 book *Bodily Healing and the Atonement* that he published in conjunction with Roy Hicks, Hagin points to both McCrossan and P. C. Nelson as his preferred sources of atonement-based divine healing teaching.⁴⁵ Hagin also endorses McCrossan's arguments that Isaiah 53 and 1 Peter 2:24 are conclusive regarding how 'Christ died for our sicknesses as He died for our sins'.⁴⁶ Hagin's use of McCrossan's arguments as well as some of the lesser known English translations McCrossan employs as illustrations in *Bodily healing and the atonement* demonstrate that McCrossan is a key influence on Hagin's substitutionary understanding of the atonement in relation to healing. Indeed, Hagin follows McCrossan so closely that, when discussing Isaiah 53:3-5 in *Healing Belongs to Us*, Hagin uses exactly the same quotes as McCrossan in the same order. Specifically, Hagin cites Young's Analytical Concordance followed by Isaac Leeser's translation in the same manner as McCrossan.⁴⁷

⁴³ *Healing Belongs to Us*, 14.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Hagin, *Healing Belongs to Us*, 13-14. Hagin uses the same citation originating from McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*. And on two more occasions in Hagin, *Bible Healing Study Course*, 37, 76. Hagin's use of Young's *Analytical Concordance* is directly related to Hagin's understanding of theodicy since Young's explanation of "the permissive sense" provides a linguistic rationale for God never actively placing sickness on the bodies of believers. Troy Edwards points out that Hagin refers to Young's *Analytical*

However, as with Nuzum, Kenyon, Bosworth and Macmillan on other occasions, McCrossan is not mentioned at all in *Healing Belongs to Us*, despite Hagin's publication of the edited edition of *Bodily healing and the atonement* having taken place in 1982, two years earlier than publication of *Healing Belongs to Us* (1984).

For his part, McCrossan looks to A. J. Gordon, Andrew Murray and A. B. Simpson to substantiate his conclusions in relation to Isaiah 53:4 and Matthew 8:17.⁴⁸ However, A. J. Gordon and specifically *The Ministry of Healing* is McCrossan's most cited single source.⁴⁹

Hagin and Hicks also made the editorial decision to remove an entire section answering McCrossan's rhetorical question 'why is faith for healing not always given instantly?' in which McCrossan engages with common arguments against divine healing being 'in the atonement' based on 2 Timothy 4:20 and 1 Tim 5:23.⁵⁰ McCrossan's original four-page section is deleted without reference to its presence in the original edition.⁵¹

Taken together, Hagin and Hicks' editorial decisions demonstrate a degree of bias against opposing views on the subject of atonement healing as well as against critical engagement in

Concordance in the following two books: *Redeemed from the Curse of Poverty, Sickness and Spiritual Death*, 20th printing, 2nd ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1983), 12. *The Key to Scriptural Healing*, 5, 6.

Edwards notes that the same references that Hagin uses are also visible in Dowie and therefore Hagin could have found Young's writings via Dowie. However, considering that McCrossan cited Young's *Analytical Concordance* and that Hagin edited an edition of the book in which that citation took place, it is most likely that either McCrossan or the combination of McCrossan and Dowie were Hagin's source for the discovery of Young's concordance. Indeed, since one of Hagin's references to Young is found in *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness and Spiritual death*, which is significantly inspired by the work of Swift (see Chapter 5), Swift is another possible source of Hagin's discovery of Young. What the existence of multiple atonement healing sources citing Young tells us is that the atonement-healing-derived view of theodicy was already accepted by a number of sources significantly before it was discovered by Hagin. See: Robert Young, *Hints and Helps to Bible Interpretation: Extracted from the Appendix of His Analytical Concordance to the Bible [with] Appendixes* (Vindicating God Ministries, 2023), 7-10.

⁴⁸ McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 23.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 24, 46, 47. Andrew Murray is mentioned twice and A. B. Simpson once. Indeed, Hagin and Hicks's edition of *Bodily healing and the atonement* reveals that McCrossan describes *The Ministry of Healing* as "a book every saint should read". Hagin's retention of McCrossan's recommendation of Gordon is all the more remarkable in light of Hagin and Hicks' decision to cut out the names of scholars holding differing views on the atonement to the editors. In the original 1930 edition McCrossan engages with the anti-healing-in-the-atonement arguments of Dr I. M. Haldeman and Dr Gaebeline, citing them by name and referring to each individually as a "splendid man of God". The quotes are kept, but the names are deleted in the Hagin and Hicks edition.

⁵⁰ McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 60-63.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

general. However, such choices also signal stronger endorsement of the material and sources that are retained in the Hagin and Hicks 1982 edition. As a result, Hagin and Hicks' decision to focus their edition of *Bodily healing and the atonement* on McCrossan's historical arguments for the continuation of healing as well as on the relevance of Isaiah 53:3-5 for contemporary physical divine healing signal their importance to Hagin and WoF. Likewise, A. J. Gordon's emergence as a key influence on McCrossan and as a well-used source in the later edition of *Healing Belongs to Us*, while other academics and contemporary ministers such as Bosworth are overlooked, is noteworthy.

However, as Hagin's foreword to *Bodily and the atonement* demonstrates, T. J. McCrossan was not the only influence on Hagin's atonement healing beliefs. Hagin's foreword makes a veiled reference to P. C. Nelson's 1921 book *Does Christ Heal Today?* as well.⁵² Hagin also quotes *Does Christ Heal Today?* in his own healing writing, referring to the author affectionately as 'Dad Nelson'.⁵³ Elsewhere in Hagin's body of work, entire passages and much of the reasoning behind Hagin's *The Woman Question* comes straight from Nelson's book of the same name.⁵⁴ Together these connections suggest Nelson was one of the most significant influences on Hagin in the same way that Kenyon, MacMillan, Bosworth, McCrossan and Nuzum have been shown to be.⁵⁵ And that, once again, suggests

⁵² T. J. McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement (Hagin and Hicks)*, 1989, 3rd printing, 2nd ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1982), 7.

⁵³ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Seven Things You Should Know About Divine Healing*, 11th printing, (1995) ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1979), 77. Compare with point 93 in Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 91.

⁵⁴ Hagin credits Nelson's "mimeographed notes" for being "of great assistance" in the "preparation of this book", but passages such as "is every man the head of every woman? Assuredly not! A man may be the head of one woman—his wife. But he is not the head of every woman" are actually direct, uncited quotations. Compare: Hagin, *The Woman Question*, 6. P. C. Nelson, *The Woman Question* (Enid, Oklahoma: Southwestern Bible School, 1931), 4. Likewise, Hagin fails to reference this entire passage which was originally written four decades earlier by Nelson: "The Greek word used for man and for husband in the New Testament is the same word, aner. The Greek of the New Testament had no separate word for husband. Likewise, it had no word for wife. Therefore, the Greek word for woman, gyne, has been translated both as woman and as wife. Hence, it must be determined by the setting which of these significations should be given to the words in the English passage." Compare: Hagin, *The Woman Question*, 17. Nelson, *The Woman Question*, 5. Compare also: Hagin, *The Woman Question*, 23. Nelson, *The Woman Question*, 6.

⁵⁵ See (2.1.1) and (2.1.2).

Hagin was less reliant on Kenyon for his theological inspiration than has previously been suggested. Kenyon aside, it is now clear that Hagin drew from a far wider range of sources than has previously been accepted. Furthermore, while King has argued for a qualified connection between the Christian Missionary Alliance and WoF,⁵⁶ Nelson's demonstrable influence on Hagin is evidence of a stronger connection between North American Classical Pentecostalism and WoF than has previously been shown. The theological impact of those historical discoveries is that Hagin was unlikely to have been originating a new theology of divine healing at the time. Rather, Hagin was compiling his healing theology from existing sources, existing sources that brought with them theologically interacting elements.

Written almost a decade before *Bodily healing and the atonement*, Nelson's *Does Christ Heal Today?* follows a similar, albeit shorter, pattern of historical and scriptural argument, supported by contemporary testimonies compared with McCrossan's book. During his historical section, Nelson's arguments for the continuation of divine healing are also very similar to A. J. Gordon's in *The Ministry of Healing*. On a few occasions, Nelson uses exactly the same quotations as Gordon and McCrossan, with all three quoting identical passages from Lukawitz, Bost and Zinzendorf within a couple of pages of each other.⁵⁷ In McCrossan's case, when it comes to Lukawitz, he notes that he found the quotation in Gordon rather than in primary source material.⁵⁸ Indeed, Nelson explicitly cites Gordon's 'wonderful treatise' *The Ministry of Healing*.⁵⁹ Considering that Gordon's work had been in print for almost four decades by the time Nelson's book was published, and considering the similarities between Nelson and McCrossan's arguments, Gordon's influence on Nelson is visible in a similar way to how Gordon appears to have influenced McCrossan.

⁵⁶ King, *Only Believe*, 52.

⁵⁷ Compare: Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing*, 65.

Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 10-11.

McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 67-68.

⁵⁸ *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 67-68.

⁵⁹ Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 78.

In addition to historical arguments, McCrossan's *Bodily healing and the atonement* as well as both Nelson's *Does Christ Heal Today?* and *Bible Doctrines* make the scriptural case that, in Nelson's words, 'deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers' based explicitly on Isaiah 53:4-5.⁶⁰ Writing halfway between the publication of Nelson and McCrossan's works, Bosworth's *Christ the Healer* (1924) makes very similar points based on the same Scriptures.⁶¹ Nelson testifies that his belief in healing came as the result of 'a new study of the Bible concerning divine healing' and that he subsequently attended Bosworth's meetings.⁶² Whether Bosworth's teaching was inspirational or confirmatory of Nelson's new-found atonement healing beliefs, Bosworth was an early influence on Nelson's healing ministry. And Bosworth, like McCrossan, makes repeated reference to A. J. Gordon's *Ministry of Healing* in the sections of *Christ the Healer* that emphasise substitutionary readings of the atonement.⁶³ Furthermore, McCrossan and Bosworth directly quote from the same pages of *Ministry of Healing*, using these examples to illustrate points about the vicarious nature of Christ's suffering on behalf of humanity as the basis for the physical healing of believers.⁶⁴

A. J. Gordon, therefore, emerges as the one influence all three sources have in common. McCrossan and Bosworth cite Gordon to a greater degree than other sources cited in their works. In the case of Nelson, Gordon's influence is less obvious. However, the similarities between Nelson's and McCrossan's arguments as well as the quotations they use (which in

⁶⁰ P. C. Nelson, *Bible Doctrines* (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1948), 131. Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 34-35.

⁶¹ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 35-41.

⁶² Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 47-48. Cf. Eunice Perkins, *Joybringer Bosworth His Life Story* (Dayton, Ohio: John J Scruby, 1921), 178. But the hand of providence should also be noted. Nelson's healing experience resulted from an injury that took place while his wife was at Carrie Judd Montgomery's home in Oakland, California in October 1920. See: Lester Sumrall, *Pioneers of Faith*, 4th Printing, August 2018. ed. (South Bend, Indiana: Lesea Publishing, 1995), 108.

⁶³ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 41.

⁶⁴ McCrossan and Bosworth both refer to pages 16 and 17 of Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing*. See McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 33. And Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 40.

McCossan's case are attributed to Gordon) suggest Gordon's influence on both sources. To this we can add the indirect utilisation of Gordon in Bosworth who was, in turn, influential to the establishment of Nelson's atonement healing-based itinerant healing ministry.⁶⁵ In addition, Nelson himself spoke highly of another of Gordon's works, *The ministry of the Spirit*, calling it a 'great book'.⁶⁶

Therefore, taken together, Nelson, Bosworth and McCossan represent an interconnected source base for Hagin's belief that healing is provided for in the atonement as a result of the vicarious suffering of Christ.⁶⁷ And when we consider that Hagin retained references to Gordon when he deleted the names of other sources he disagreed with in his edition of *Bodily healing and the atonement*, there are indications that Gordon's influence stretched as far as Hagin himself.⁶⁸

The emergence of Gordon as a unifying source of the atonement healing teaching that inspired the group most directly influential to Hagin raises the question of where Gordon's healing teaching originated. That is significant because pre-existing sources could indicate whether or not those sources were already operating systematically. A complete answer to the question strays beyond the research focus on the interconnected features of WoF theology, but it is worth noting that half a dozen references to Edward Irving can be found in *The Ministry of Healing*.⁶⁹ On these occasions, Gordon mainly cites the fifth volume of Irving's *Collected Works*, but he also refers to the *Morning Watch* journal Irving contributed to as well as Margaret Oliphant's biography of Irving. Gordon's references are spread across five chapters and are particularly detailed in the 'Testimony of theologians' chapter, which

⁶⁵ Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 47-48. Cf. Perkins, *Joybringer Bosworth His Life Story*, 178.

⁶⁶ P. C. Nelson, *Bible Doctrines* (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1942), 83.

⁶⁷ Kenyon's own connections with the written teaching and personal ministry of AJ Gordon serve only to further advance such a connection (see 1.1.1n34).

⁶⁸ AJ Gordon was also a key influence on another of Hagin's main influences – EW Kenyon. See McIntyre, *E. W. Kenyon and His Message of Faith*, Chapter 6, especially footnotes 18, 19 and 20.

⁶⁹ Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing*, 51, 77, 102-04, 77, 207.

suggests the degree of esteem in which Gordon held Irving. The significance of Irving's appearance in Gordon's work to the WoF source base is that the fifth volume of Irving's *Collected Works* focuses on the incarnation and atoning work of Christ, with Gordon's selected quotations emphasising the vicarious nature of Christ's suffering in the redemptive work.⁷⁰ The implication is that long before Hagin and even Kenyon (as well as Kenyon's influences), Irving attested to a similarly systematic understanding of atonement healing in and even suggested that the atonement took place on multiple planes (which is examined further in 4.2.2.2).

The most explicit sources of Hagin's divine healing teaching (namely, Bosworth, Nelson and McCrossan) centre their teaching on the belief that physical healing is provided in the atonement. While he is not closely connected historically,⁷¹ all three look to A. J. Gordon in support of their atonement healing views, making Gordon a unifying influence on both this selected source base and even Hagin himself via the source base. Thematically, the writings of all four sources focus on substitutionary views of the atonement as the grounds for their theology of healing – a view that Gordon appears to have derived from the work of Edward Irving. As a result, Irving must be considered as an influence on WoF's atonement healing source base, which raises the question of the extent to which Irving indirectly influenced Hagin and the WoF movement's understanding of divine healing in general and the role of atonement healing belief in particular.

Ostensibly Kenneth Hagin's theology of healing relies on the atonement for its narrative and scriptural rationale, with Hagin's republishing of T. J. McCrossan's *Bodily Healing in the Atonement* and references to P. C. Nelson's *Does Christ Heal Today?* key examples of such messaging. However, upon closer inspection, WoF's theology of healing exists both in the

⁷⁰ Compare *ibid.*, 105. Edward Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, ed. G. Carlyle, vol. V (London: Alexander Strahan, 1865), 451.

⁷¹ Apart from Bosworth's initial influence on Nelson.

midst of established Healing Movement and Pentecostal notions of divine healing in the atonement and is also read through the interpretative lenses of trichotomy and faith acquired by Hagin. Indeed, Hagin's particular variation on the established divine healing themes is evident from his initial and foundational healing testimony onwards. Hagin develops the faith teaching of his spiritual forbears into a rudimentary system by linking it with positive confession as a key means of manifesting what was purchased in the atonement and communicated in the Scriptures. Therefore, while the atonement plays an important role in WoF doctrine, according to Hagin's reading, it primarily functions as the grounds for the provision of promises. Based on the Healing Movement and early Pentecostal sources from which he draws, Hagin's innovation is to combine substitutionary atonement healing views with trichotomy, faith and positive confession. Hagin's sources are unanimous that healing in the atonement is directly connected to concepts of substitutionary sacrifice.

4.2 The Theological Function of the Atonement and Healing in Word of Faith

Having established a context for understanding WoF healing, we now turn to healing's theological function. As we have seen, trichotomy, faith and positive confession provide an interpretative framework. In sum, they represent an immaterial phase of interconnected features, with positive confession acting as a bridge between the immaterial and the material. Since divine healing is inherently connected to the physical manifestation of healing in the human body, divine healing represents both a key outcome of the preceding features and a crucial narrative for understanding the complexities of trichotomy and faith. And since healing is deemed to be *in the atonement*, understanding the function of atonement in relation to healing is a key part of understanding all the interconnected features of WoF.

WoF healing, as recounted by the source base identified in the contextualisation, flows from an un-expounded notion of being provided *in the atonement*. Bosworth, Nelson

and McCrossan regularly refer to the atonement and generally view it in substitutional terms, but they are less clear about how atonement functions in relation to healing. At the same time, a particular emphasis on the theological implications of the language used in English translations of the biblical Scriptures relating to healing and the atonement was revealed in the contextualisation (see 4.1.1). WoF's somewhat uncharacteristic historical grammatical approach to Scripture in relation to healing results in a greater emphasis on scriptural language than in relation to the other features in the preceding features, something that is reflected in the make-up of the analysis section of this chapter.

The contextualisation also revealed Hagin's reliance on a number of key Healing Movement and early Pentecostal sources for his understanding of divine healing. These form the basis of WoF's healing theology, all arguing that divine healing is 'in the atonement'.⁷² But does that mean it is provided for in the atonement, was completed in the atonement, or something else? WoF healing teaching is also more systematised than its sources since WoF beliefs are inter-connected with the other features identified – specifically trichotomy, faith and positive confession. Rather than simply adopting the positions held by the source base, Hagin and the wider WoF movement build their healing theology based on the interpretative groundwork laid by trichotomy and faith. Thus, according to the WoF understanding, healing is acquired by faith via the human spirit and manifested through positive confession and/or sensory denial – beliefs that are predicated on the movement's understanding of trichotomous anthropology due to its reliance on a distinct concept of the human spirit as part of the trichotomy.

When WoF sources say healing is *in* the atonement in combination with their trichotomous anthropology, the possibility of a tri-dimensional redemption corresponding

⁷²Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 200, 32 and 31 other occasions. Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 34-35. McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement*, 29, 30, 31 and 18 other occasions.

with the human spirit, soul and body is made available. Since trichotomy is both an entry point and a foundation to the WoF system,⁷³ when trichotomy is read in conjunction with atonement in the context of healing, that combination reverberates into other WoF features suggesting redemption from the effects of the fall in spirit, soul and body or, to put it another way, spiritual, emotional and physical healing. The result is that such a view of substitutional atonement provides the basis for a theology of exchange, with believers exchanging sin and sickness relating to the human spirit and the human body respectively with Christ and receiving righteousness and healing from Christ. With that interpretative context in mind, the analysis section of this chapter further analyses both the position and function of healing in relation to the trichotomy, faith and positive confession.

4.2.1 The Function of Divine Healing in Relation to Trichotomy, Faith and Positive Confession

‘Healing is the dinner bell of the gospel’ is a well-known Pentecostal phrase emphasising the importance of divine healing to classical Pentecostalism. However, the precise origins of that particular idiom are not easily found.⁷⁴ Hagin’s use of the dinner bell image offers a useful point of comparison that also provides the basis for an illustrative metaphor.

Kenneth Hagin testifies that he took the advice of Raymond T. Richey that ‘divine healing is the dinner bell. Keep ringing that bell and people will come’.⁷⁵ As a result, Hagin reports that he ‘started ringing a dinner bell every Saturday night by preaching what the Word of God said about the power of the gospel to save, deliver and heal...I just kept ringing the dinner bell, and God was faithful to manifest His supernatural delivering power’.⁷⁶ However,

⁷³ See chapter 1.

⁷⁴ One possibility is the suggestion that John Alexander Dowie rang an actual dinner bell as a means of attracting attendance at his first healing meeting in 1893. Yeomans, *Healing from Heaven*, 112.

⁷⁵ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Classic Sermons*, 2014 Electronic Edition ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1992), 158.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

WoF healing is more complex and systematised than Richey's classical Pentecostal understanding, so we have to understand Hagin's words to mean that he preached WoF healing teaching along with its inherently interconnected understanding of trichotomy, faith and positive confession.

Within WoF, healing belongs to believers as a complete spiritual reality that may not necessarily have manifested physically.⁷⁷ This belief is predicated on the presupposition that humans are specifically constituted of spirit, soul and body. Indeed, in Stalker's words, 'all sin consists in the usurpation by the body or the soul of the place of the [human] spirit.'⁷⁸ According to WoF teaching, Adam and Eve's fall was caused by the elevation of the soul above the human spirit, which resulted in the death of the human spirit and the curse of Genesis 3:14.⁷⁹ Physical sickness is understood as an inherent consequence of the curse of the fall. Read with such an emphasis on the elevation of the soul, the image of a hierarchy within the trichotomy is, once again, evoked, bringing with it the suggestion that a mis-ordering of the human constitution could be exemplified by Eve's reliance on faulty human reasoning (Genesis 3:1-2) and physical sensory knowledge (Genesis 3:6), corresponding to the elevation of the soul and body above the spirit and specifically above the word of God, resulting in 'spiritual death'.⁸⁰ Seen through the interpretative lens of trichotomy, 'spiritual death' is taken to mean death of the human spirit. WoF's answer via Stalker is to correct the perceived anthropological mis-ordering, restoring 'the lost predominance of the spirit of man' via the Holy Spirit's dwelling in the human spirit 'vivifying it' so that it 'becomes more and more the sovereign part of the human constitution'.⁸¹ In these terms, physical sickness is spiritual in origin for two reasons.

⁷⁷ Hagin, *Healing Belongs to Us*.

⁷⁸ Stalker, *The Life of Saint Paul*, 53.

⁷⁹ See Chapter 3.

⁸⁰ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 29.

⁸¹ Stalker, *The Life of Saint Paul*, 53. Cf. Hagin, *Bible Healing Study Course*, 78-80.

First, because of what might be called the positional fall of the human spirit within the trichotomy. As Hagin says, emphasising the centrality of trichotomy to WoF's redemption narrative, 'before we can understand death...we must understand that man is not a physical being. Man is a spirit who possesses a soul and lives in a body.'⁸² In other words, Adam's spiritual death was caused by the soul and the body usurping the predominance of the human spirit within the trichotomy. Since the human spirit is seen as the primary and sometimes even sole connection with the divine, such mis-ordering ended humanity's direct connection with God. The result was Adam's spiritual death. Put another way, the exaggerated role of the soul resulted in the decay of both the soul and the body.⁸³ The good news, perhaps even the gospel as it pertains to that particular point, according to WoF sources, is that identification with Christ undoes such decay by reversing the fall of the human spirit's position within the trichotomy. Furthermore, not only is the human spirit re-seated in a position of predominance within the individual's trichotomy, the believer is also unified with Christ in their spirit via the recreation of the human spirit. From here, the positive impact of rebirth and recreation is extrapolated out into realms beyond the divine healing of physical conditions.⁸⁴

Continuing that line of reasoning, because the curse was a consequence of the fall and resulted in both physical and spiritual death, the corollary is a promise of health and divine life to believers in Christ the second Adam. According to Hagin, 'The first curse which God said would come upon man for breaking His law is... spiritual death was to come upon them if they disobeyed God.'⁸⁵ And while 'spiritual death is that which lays hold of our spirits rather than our bodies', Hagin says, 'physical death is a manifestation of spiritual death'.⁸⁶

⁸² *Redeemed from Poverty*, 29.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁸⁴ Indeed, Mark Hankins suggests Christians have "equal possession [with Christ] because of equal position" on the basis that Jesus "got in your jersey" at the point of salvation. Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 110-18.

⁸⁵ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 29.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

The problem for non-believers, according to WoF is that, with the human spirit usurped by the soul within the trichotomy, and with the fallen human spirit (and indeed humanity) cursed, the soul and body has no access to the ‘vivifying’ action of the Holy Spirit. And physical sickness is a consequence. More specifically, a satanic ‘spirit of infirmity’ is described as the particular source of sickness in the absence of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁷ A primarily spiritual work of redemption pertaining to the human spirit is therefore required in order to address the lack of spiritual life as well as the negative spiritual source of sickness. To summarise, WoF teaches that sickness is both a consequence of the lost predominance of the human spirit within the trichotomy (along with its connection to divine life) and that the fall resulted in humankind’s inheritance of a spirit of infirmity.

Moving in the opposite direction, once spiritual redemption is achieved at the point of salvation, divine healing is understood to be complete spiritually, which makes the manifestation of divine healing largely a question of appropriating physically (via the soul) what has been achieved spiritually. As Bosworth says, ‘Since our bodies are members of Christ, His glorified bodily life is as truly linked with our bodies, as His spiritual life is linked with our spirits.’⁸⁸ In other words, believers draw on the healing power of the Holy Spirit through the reborn human spirit via the soul so healing can then be manifested in the body.

As we saw in more detail in Chapter 3, once acquired by faith,⁸⁹ WoF teaching suggests such spiritual realities can then be brought to manifestation via positive confession. To this end, divine healing interacts with the meditative function of positive confession in a reflexive way. Specifically, believers verbally confess scriptural promises and words that affirm those promises irrespective of their physical state of manifestation.⁹⁰ According to the

⁸⁷ Hagin, *Bible Healing Study Course*, 16-19, 57-59.

⁸⁸ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 63.

⁸⁹ See Chapter 2.

⁹⁰ See Chapter 3.

movement's understanding of trichotomy, the meditative function of positive confession renews believers' minds to the truth (that they are already healed as a result of Christ's sacrifice), which has the effect of re-seating the human spirit in its position of supremacy within the human constitution. Such a re-alignment prevents the hindrance of the reception and physical manifestation of divine healing that has been provided for in the atonement. Indeed, believers are exhorted to testify to what is done invisibly as a practical means of manifesting visible healing.⁹¹ As a result, positive confession is simultaneously a testimony of an unmaterialised faith reality and an attestation to the materialisation of divine physical healing. Furthermore, once healing is manifested, believers are encouraged to testify to the physical manifestation of the healing.⁹² By this stage in the process, positive confession and testimony act as a kind of feedback loop that both obtains and reports healing, but also distributes and propagates the same beliefs. Consequently, the function of the 'dinner bell', to use Richie and Hagins' words, is both to attract attention towards as well as manifesting and perpetuating the message of divine healing.

Therefore, while Hagin might have adopted the dinner bell image from classical Pentecostal sources, WoF teaching develops the picture and redeploys its own version processed and coloured through its framework of beliefs.

4.2.2 Word of Faith Atonement Language and Healing

Just as Hagin's use of Richie's dinner bell imagery assumes the movement's particular understanding of terms such as 'divine healing' and 'gospel', so WoF assumes understanding

⁹¹ "Those who are anointed should praise the Lord by faith, whether they see or feel anything or not. Many wonderful healings have been taken by faith without any evidence whatever other than the word of God." Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 88.

⁹² "Encourage those who are healed to give glory to God for their deliverance" crucially Nelson adds "but not to overstate the facts. Exaggeration can do great injury to the cause of Christ" *ibid.*, 91. In line with the former point, Hagin refers to his own healing testimony (as well as others) countless time across virtually every book he published.

of the term atonement. For example, questions relating to the place, means, extent and methods of appropriation of the atonement are not directly addressed. Since WoF's understanding of divine healing is so heavily reliant on the language of atonement (see 4.1.3), it is necessary to further examine the theological pre-suppositions associated with the movement's choices of and interpretation of atonement language in order to illustrate the function of divine healing.

4.2.2.1 Word of Faith Atonement Theories

WoF sources are not precise in their usage of terms such as atonement, so re-reading previously mentioned sources helps address the question of what kind of atonement the movement refers to in relation to divine healing. Arguably the most systematically organised source of WoF theology, Mark Hankins,⁹³ suggests ambiguously that there are 'four major views of the atonement',⁹⁴ namely: 'substitution or satisfaction',⁹⁵ 'the ransom view',⁹⁶ 'the blood covenant',⁹⁷ and 'the moral view or the love of God'.⁹⁸ However, Hankins' short definitions of each atonement view also lack precision. For example, Hankins conflates substitution and satisfaction into a single view of the atonement and suggests '[Christ] took our place on the cross and identified with us in our sin, sickness and sorrow.'⁹⁹ While he is explicit that 'Jesus took man's place' and 'satisfied the demands of a holy God',¹⁰⁰ Hankins' explanation offers little detail of the atonement exchange. At the same time, Hankins' strong emphasis of the blood covenant as the third of his four major views stands out as an unusual

⁹³ Mark Hankins can be WoF movement's more systematic sources because his work is reliant on the what he calls "Paul's system of faith" (elsewhere "pneuma concept") as the basis for much of his preaching. See Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

way of describing the atonement. What unifies Hankins' list of four atonement views is the repeated use of substitutionary language as a common factor in each definition. While Hankins' four major views of the atonement may not represent a consensus of how to understand atonement, another reading is available to us. Hankins could be suggesting that his four understandings of the atonement represent the major views of atonement within WoF.

If Hankins is suggesting his four understandings of the atonement represent the major views of atonement within WoF, we would expect to see evidence amongst the key influences on the movement. Since Kenyon's *What happened from the cross to the throne* is Kenyon's most explicitly atonement-related work, and since Kenyon is undoubtedly a key influence on Hagin and thereby WoF, *What happened from the cross...* offers an opportunity to test Hankins' suggestion that 'substitution or satisfaction', 'the ransom view', 'the blood covenant' and 'the moral view or the love of God' are 'the main' views of the atonement within WoF. The number of references related to those terms reveals Kenyon uses the terms 'substitute' or 'substitutionary' fifty-eight times (see Table 1, which summarises the frequency of occurrence of atonement-related terms). 'Satisfaction', on the other hand, occurs only once and in an unrelated context.¹⁰¹ 'Ransom' and 'ransomed' appear once each.¹⁰² (In other cases, the terms ransom and atonement are occasionally used synonymously).¹⁰³ 'Covenant' and 'Blood covenant' appear 301 times. The term 'moral view' may not be used, but it is implied by repeated references to the love of God being the motivating factor behind the work of the atonement: 'It was Love that drove Jesus to become incarnate. Love drove Him during His three and a half years of public ministry. It was not the cruel spikes driven

¹⁰¹ Kenyon speaks of "satisfaction" in relation to Psalm 23's "I shall not want". E. W. Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 13th ed. (Kenyon's Gospel Publishing, 1946), 201.

¹⁰² Ibid., 79 and 189.

¹⁰³ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 29.

through His hands and feet...it was love.¹⁰⁴ The terms ‘victor’ and ‘victory’ occur six and seven times respectively, but while they are generally used with reference to Christ’s victory, they mostly refer to the victory believers have as a result of Christ’s atonement as opposed to the atonement being characterised as Christ’s victory. However, the Christus Victor view of atonement is implied by a few references to Christ’s ‘defeat’ of Satan such as ‘the resurrection of Jesus meant Satan was defeated.’¹⁰⁵

Table 1: Atonement language in E.W. Kenyon’s *What happened from the cross to the throne*

Term ¹⁰⁶	Number of occasions used:
‘Love’ ¹⁰⁷	359
‘Blood covenant’ ¹⁰⁸	301
‘Substitute’ ¹⁰⁹	58
‘Satisfaction’ ¹¹⁰	15
‘Victor(y)’ ¹¹¹	13
‘Scape-goat’	3
‘Ransom’ ¹¹²	2

¹⁰⁴ Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 27; *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 69, 71.

Interestingly, the term “scape-goat” is used three times in *What happened from the cross to the throne*. While the scapegoat typology is generally used in support of substitutionary readings of the atonement, it provides the opportunity for a contemporary re-reading of WoF atonement through scapegoat theories of atonement.

¹⁰⁶ Including similar or derivatives. See following footnotes for future details.

¹⁰⁷ Love – 269, loved – 39, Love’s – 13, loves – 9, lover – 7, total – 359.

¹⁰⁸ Covenant – 283, blood covenant – 18, total – 301.

¹⁰⁹ Substitute – 29, substitutionary – 15, substitution – 13, substitute’s – 1, total – 58.

¹¹⁰ Satisfied – 12, satisfy – 2, satisfaction 1.

¹¹¹ Victory – 7, victor – 6, total – 13.

¹¹² Ransom – 1, ransomed – 1, total 2.

Analysing Kenyon's *What happened from the cross to the throne* through the prism of Hankins' four major views of the atonement reveals that, while other major theories of atonement play little or no role in WoF understanding of atonement, language relating to Hankins' four views predominate. Taking Kenyon as a representative example of the movement's views, WoF atonement is characterised as a love-motivated and victorious substitutionary event that purchases the promises associated with 'blood covenant' and redeems humanity from the spiritual curse(s) of the fall.

WoF's amalgamated atonement narratives form both a further interpretative lens and a supporting pillar to an emerging theological system that necessarily interacts with the preceding features. For example, Hankins notes that Christ's substitutional suffering in 'sin, sickness and sorrow' relates to the spirit, body and soul respectively and therefore pre-supposes the movement's trichotomous anthropology.¹¹³ The result is that whatever is found wanting in the life of the believer, and in whichever dimension of their constitution, corresponding atoning work is required. Stated differently, the suffering of Jesus at the scourging and crucifixion provided for physical healing and Christ's torment in the Garden of Gethsemane provided for emotional and psychological restoration. The substitute – Jesus Christ – not only vicariously suffers on behalf of the believer and pays the debt they owe,¹¹⁴ but – since He is the Son of God – provides access to His own divine life (*zoe* in the Greek, a word which itself forms the title of one of Hagin's other books) in place of the curse of the fall.¹¹⁵ And therefore, the act of atonement corresponds to wherever the anthropologically-located suffering takes place, a detail that brings with it a multi-dimensional understanding of atonement.

¹¹³ Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 91.

¹¹⁴ Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 79.

¹¹⁵ Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*. Hagin, *Zoe: The God Kind of Life*, 142.

4.2.2.2 'Power Prepositions': Word of Faith Readings of Atonement and Identification

WoF sources consistently argue that divine healing is 'in' the atonement. But the source base is opaquer about what 'in' means in relation to the atonement. Does 'is in' relate to the ontological reality of healing? Does 'in the atonement' mean healing is understood to be complete and manifest? There is little in the way of direct answers to those questions within the writing of WoF proponents, but further research reveals the movement maintains its fascination with prepositions in relation to divine healing, the atonement and the divine. Therefore, this sub-section pays particularly close attention to what Mark Hankins calls 'power prepositions',¹¹⁶ using contemporary and historical examples to demonstrate how the use of English identification-related preposition-based terms such as *in Christ* and *in Him* are connected with the movement's concepts of atonement and identification and, in turn, divine healing.

WoF's penchant for 'power prepositions' originated with A. J. Gordon's *In Christ; or the believer's union with his Lord*,¹¹⁷ which inspired Kenyon's emphasis on identification,¹¹⁸ is quoted at length by Mark Hankins,¹¹⁹ and was probably the ultimate inspiration for Hagin's *In Him* concept via Gordon and Kenyon.¹²⁰ The difference between Gordon and Hagin is that Hagin fuses Gordon's union-with-Christ-teaching with Kenyon's identification and positive confession doctrines, concluding: 'Find His provisions for His children in His Word and make them become reality in your life *in Christ* to the glory of God the Father!'¹²¹ In other words, in WoF circles, the Scriptures describe divine promises which are attainable by

¹¹⁶ Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 136.

¹¹⁷ A. J. Gordon, *In Christ; or the Believer's Union with His Lord* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1872).

¹¹⁸ McIntyre, *E. W. Kenyon and His Message of Faith*, 80. Cf. Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 120.

¹¹⁹ Hankins, *Paul's System of Truth*, 133-36.

¹²⁰ Kenneth E. Hagin, *In Him* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1980).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 27. Emphasis added. Cf. Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Spirit within & the Spirit Upon: The Holy Spirit's Two-Fold Work for the Believer* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 2003). The Spirit within receives further attention in Chapter 5.

believers due to the identifying nature of the incarnation and the providing work of the atonement combined with the acquisitive faith and/or positive confession of believers.

Bosworth's writing offers further detail of how WoF interprets the English prepositions associated with identification in the New Testament specifically in relation to atonement healing. In the space of one page of *Christ the Healer*, Bosworth writes that divine healing is 'in' the atonement, comes 'through' the atonement and that divine healing is 'provided for' in the atonement.¹²² Like Hagin, Bosworth emphasises how the atonement provides for the believer. Analysing how different sources interact with these terms brings further insight into how the atonement is understood in relation to divine healing in the movement.

In 2010, the US Assemblies of God (AG) affirmed that divine healing is 'provided for in the atonement' and then 'provided in the atonement' in a position paper on divine healing.¹²³ That latter reference initially appears to be a strengthening of the P. C. Nelson-originated wording ('provided for in the atonement') published in AG's 'Statement of Fundamental Truths' in 1916.¹²⁴ However, despite P. C. Nelson being 'the original author' of that 'Statement of Fundamental Truths' as well as *Bible Doctrines* – a book-length exposition of the same fundamentals – the meaning attached to 'provided for' has changed significantly between the 20th and 21st century with theological implications that relate to the understanding of divine healing.¹²⁵ For Bosworth and Nelson, the provision of healing *in* the atonement was an argument in favour of God's will to heal today and an exhortation towards corresponding acts of faith since 'the benefits of his atonement can be appropriated by faith and in no other way.'¹²⁶ However, by 2010 the same phrase was used as a way of explaining

¹²² Bosworth, *Christ the Healer*, 34.

¹²³ AG General Presbytery, "Divine Healing," (Springfield, Missouri: Assemblies of God USA, 2010), 1, 3.

¹²⁴ Nelson, *Bible Doctrines*, 3. Foreword to the 1981 edition.

¹²⁵ Ibid. Foreword to the 1981 edition.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 131.

why some divine healing is not fully realized. P. C. Nelson (inspired by A. J. Gordon and F. F. Bosworth) used ‘provided for’ as a means of encouraging belief in the physical realisation of divine healing, something that is demonstrated by his promotion of the Bible Union Version translation of Isaiah 53:4, which says ‘and through His stripes came healing to us.’¹²⁷ However, the 2010 AG statement in some ways argues in the opposite direction, suggesting that ‘provided for’ does not equate to realisation but rather the opening of the possibility of temporal healing and the promise of it in the eschaton.¹²⁸ That shift stands in contrast with WoF understanding, which sees healing as spiritually complete now, even if not manifested physically. Indeed, the shift reflects AG’s moves to distinguish itself from WoF, something that is seen most clearly in the denomination’s repudiation of positive confession in its 1980 position paper on the subject.¹²⁹

The provenance of the Finished Work doctrine aside, WoF’s combination of a Finished Work soteriology with its positive confession doctrine at least adds the step of outworking saving faith. In doing so, the soteriological work associated with such a Finished Work doctrine arguably is not finished. For example, As Hagin explains, ‘As far as God is concerned, everything you have or are “in Christ” is so... However, it is your believing and your confessing it which makes it a reality to you. God wants us to enjoy and know the reality of what He has provided for us...’¹³⁰ In other words, the atonement is complete ‘in Christ’, and the atoning work identifies with humanity, but humanity needs to believe and confess in order to identify with Christ and to manifest the results of Christ’s atonement work.

Theologically, WoF has developed a new reading of Finished Work that seeks to hold

¹²⁷ Nelson, *Does Christ Heal Today? Message of Faith, Hope and Cheer for the Afflicted*, 35.

¹²⁸ AG General Presbytery, "Divine Healing," 6.

¹²⁹ AG General Presbytery, "Position Confession," (Springfield, Missouri: Assemblies of God USA, 1980).

¹³⁰ Hagin, *In Him*, 9.

Finished Work and progressive views in tension. For Hagin, the new birth ‘...does not take place gradually. It is instantaneous! It is a gift of God received the moment we believe.’¹³¹ Initially, it appears that Hagin simply contradicts himself by saying on the one hand ‘everything you have in Christ is so’ and, on the other, that we must ‘believe and confess’ to make it a reality. However, the multi-dimensionality of trichotomy helps to address the apparent contradiction. For Hagin, salvation (based on the Greek *sozo*) means ‘to save, deliver, preserve, make well and make whole’,¹³² with the conclusion that divine healing is a constituent dimension of salvation. However, Hagin also says that ‘the outward man doesn’t change in the new birth, and neither does the soul of man...Only the man on the inside changes’,¹³³ that is, the human spirit. Hagin even goes as far as saying ‘your body isn’t born again’.¹³⁴ Of course, in the most literal and physical sense, we do not return into our mother’s womb,¹³⁵ but Hagin is emphatic that ‘God divides man’ into a trichotomy, asking ‘If a person’s spirit, soul and body are one, why does the Bible divide them?’¹³⁶

The result is two-fold. First, Hagin’s trichotomous anthropology serves to separate out the constitute parts of the human constitution rather than view them as dimensions of a whole. And second, the Finished Work of the atonement is only complete in the human spirit and not in the soul and body. That means divine healing is complete in the re-born human spirit on account of the human spirit’s location ‘in Christ’,¹³⁷ but progressive in the soul to the extent that the soul identifies with what has been achieved ‘in Christ’ via positive confession and mind renewal and thereby in the human spirit. And while bodily healing may

¹³¹ *Redeemed from Poverty*, 33.

¹³² *The Triumphant Church: Dominion over All the Powers of Darkness*, Eighth printing, 2000 ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1993), 25.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹³⁵ John 3:4.

¹³⁶ Hagin, *The Triumphant Church*, 21. Original emphasis retained.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 29. Confusingly, the believer still “has to feed his recreated spirit on God’s Word” to “keep his spirit strong”.

manifest instantaneously, it is also progressive and contingent on the extent you ‘keep your body...under subjection to the recreated spirit man’.¹³⁸ Maintaining the espoused order of the trichotomy, in other words.

Hagin’s understanding of atonement-based healing reflects the Calvinist-style covenantal soteriology he inherited from his Southern Baptist roots and specifically the belief that God has offered a covenant of grace accessible by faith in place of the covenant of works under which Adam and Eve fell. In Hagin’s reading, grace is transposed to healing, which is also believed to be accessible by faith in God evidenced by confession of divine healing irrespective of manifestation. That view is then reinforced by Kenyon’s take on Finished Work sanctification, combined with a more Wesleyan soteriological understanding that results in placing the responsibility for appropriating faith healing on the believer. Indeed, one of Hagin’s very few direct citations of Wesley emphasises that point: ‘John Wesley, founder of the Methodist denomination, said, “It seems that God is limited by our prayer life. He can do nothing for humanity unless someone asks Him to do it.”’¹³⁹ The result of such a combination, according to Hagin’s testimony, was his initial healing: ‘...I received healing as a young Baptist boy reading Grandma’s Methodist Bible. I wasn’t healed because I believed in divine healing, necessarily. I was healed by acting and standing on Mark 11:24!’¹⁴⁰ For Hagin, the universality of the healing provision within the atonement was not sufficient for its manifestation. Neither was cognition of that. Rather, understanding and even belief had to be combined with scripturally associated action. More specifically, it had to be combined with the divine faith, acquisitive faith and sensory denial and/or positive confession considered in Chapter 2. Hagin testified that he received healing as a Baptist ‘reading Grandma’s Methodist

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Hagin, *Classic Sermons*, 101.

¹⁴⁰ *Bible Healing Study Course*, 169. *Seven Steps for Judging Prophecy*, 1994, 8th printing ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1982), 32-34.

Bible'. Since there is not a Methodist-specific Bible translation, this reference is indicative of the Wesleyan influence of Hagin's grandmother. And therefore, Hagin's healing as a Baptist reading a Methodist Bible neatly illustrates how reformed, Finished Work and Wesleyan soteriology combine in WoF divine healing. And since the manifestation of divine healing is reliant on trichotomy, faith and positive confession, the theology implied within that anecdote illustrates the systematic nature of WoF.

4.2.3 Word of Faith Atonement Healing, Prayer and Trinitarian Tensions

WoF atonement healing centres on physical healing by faith via the human spirit rather than what Hagin terms charismatic healing (see 4.1.2). But such a reading does not adequately consider the impact of WoF's trichotomous anthropology on WoF views of the atonement as they relate to divine healing. Therefore, we now consider how WoF atonement healing interacts with the movement's trichotomous anthropology. Since this chapter focuses on healing, the analysis begins with examples of how Hagin's trichotomy interacts with his view of the trinity in relation to prayer for divine healing. And finding trichotomy hard-wired into WoF's theology demonstrates the degree to which trichotomous understanding is reflected in its views on the trinity and how that impacts its theology of divine healing.

Within the pages of his *Bible Prayer Study Course*, Hagin repeatedly teaches that Christians must pray to the Father in the name of Jesus for two reasons: because such a formula is instructed by Scriptures including John 16:23; and because petitions (generally healing petitions) made to the Father in the name of Jesus are said to be more efficacious than those addressed to the other persons of the godhead.¹⁴¹ The implication is that Hagin does not believe God answers petitions directed to the Son as effectively as those directed explicitly to the Father. Hagin does not engage with why other Scriptures such as John 14:12-14 which

¹⁴¹ *Bible Prayer Study Guide*, 20, 25, 30, 31, 32, 33, 41, 116, 17, 18, 30, 55, 65, 68, 93.

suggest that believers can effectively direct petitionary prayer specifically to Jesus.¹⁴²

Hagin's views are based on WoF anthropology, which reflects the movement's Christology. And since WoF's trichotomous anthropology is hierarchical,¹⁴³ in light of Hagin's usage of John 16:23, WoF understanding of the Trinity tends towards hierarchy as well. At first glance it might simply appear to be a question of *taxis* rather than hierarchy, but Hagin explains that 'praying in Jesus's Name didn't do any good until He [Jesus] began His mediatorial intercession at the right hand of the Father', a conclusion that reveals Hagin's kenotic understanding of the incarnation.¹⁴⁴

Hagin does not engage with Scriptures such as Luke 18:38-43 where the blind beggar successfully petitions Jesus for healing prior to His death and resurrection. And Hagin's reading of the passage in John 16 implies a parallel between his view of the trinity and his trichotomous anthropology.¹⁴⁵ Hagin's articulation of Christ's kenosis results in the diminution of Christ, placing the Holy Spirit in a ministerial role. Meanwhile the Father is supreme but is also categorised as lower-case 'spirit'. The problem with such a reading is that Hagin teaches that prayer should be directed to the Father as the highest authority in the belief that it will be heard due to the mediation of the Son and ministered by the Spirit primarily via the human spirit.¹⁴⁶

However, when it comes to healing, as we have seen, Hagin describes God as being spiritually constituted, which in his view necessitates the exclusively spiritual reception of healing.¹⁴⁷ By establishing such orders of constitution and protocols in prayer, Hagin seeks to

¹⁴² Indeed, some English translations - including the ESV, NIV and Weymouth versions – specifically include the pronoun “me”, clarifying that the passage refers to prayer directed to Jesus.

¹⁴³ See 1.1 and 1.1.1 in particular.

¹⁴⁴ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Prayer Secrets*, Second, 12th printing, 1995 ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1988), 12. *Hear and Be Healed* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1987), 14-15.

¹⁴⁵ Stalker, *The Life of Saint Paul.*, 53-54.

¹⁴⁶ Hagin, *Prayer Secrets*, 11. *How You Can Be Led by the Spirit of God*, 56, 72.

¹⁴⁷ “...God is not a mind...Although He has a spirit-body over in the spirit world...God is not a physical being. He is a spirit.” *Bible Healing Study Course*, 80.

connect the person he sees as the highest authority in the trinity (the Father) with what he deems to be the supreme part of the human (the human spirit). Indeed, from Hagin's point of view, because God is spirit, divine healing must take place spiritually via the human spirit. The kind of ancient trinitarianism found in the Athanasian creed, which defines the Godhead as co-equal and co-eternal, helps to resolve such a conflict. Not only does the adoption of more consistent trinitarianism allow for the multi-faceted understanding of the nature of God, but it would also be consistent with a modified version of WoF anthropology utilising triunity as a reflection of the *imageo Dei*.¹⁴⁸ However, to modify WoF trichotomy in such a manner would also contradict Hagin's suggestion that believers must exclusively pray to the father in the name of Jesus.

For Hagin, divine healing read through a trichotomous lens prioritises the human spirit in general and elevates the reborn human spirit to near divine levels: 'Your spirit knows more than your head. Once you have been born again, your spirit—your inner most being—has the life and nature of God in it.'¹⁴⁹ The trichotomy is realigned via psychological and physical reordering enacted by positive confession: 'If sick people would just say [God wants me well] over and over again—2,000 or 10,000 times — it would finally dawn on their spirits, and they would get in line with what God wants'.¹⁵⁰ The result is physical manifestation of healing, as Hagin personally testifies: 'I've often made confessions for healing from the 107th Psalm; particularly from verse 20: "He sent his Word, and healed them."'¹⁵¹ Here Hagin uses the capitalised 'Word', which normally refers to Christ, and the word 'word', which normally refers to the biblical text, synonymously. In other words, he equates the sixty-six books of the Bible with Christ.

¹⁴⁸ See conclusion to (1).

¹⁴⁹ Hagin, *A Better Covenant*, 7.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

Indeed, lack of knowledge of the healing promises Scripture offers is the primary explanation for lack of healing manifestation, according to Hagin: ‘I think the majority of Christians are sick because of two reasons: First, they do not know what belongs to them under the covenant; and, second, if they begin to get a little inkling of it, they don’t know how to take advantage of it and walk in the light of the New Covenant. Thus, Satan takes advantage of Christians and destroys some of us.’¹⁵² And therefore, renewing the mind to the promises of the covenant in Scripture as well as seeking to appropriate such promises in the temporal realm are integral features of how WoF healing interacts with trichotomy, faith and positive confession. Similarly, at the conclusion of *The Key to Scriptural Healing*, Hagin explains: ‘The more I feed upon this written Word, the more real that living Word becomes in me, and the more I learn how to **appropriate** what He is in me.’¹⁵³ Again ‘Word’ (referring to Christ) and ‘word’ (referring to the Bible) are used interchangeably. Whether conscious or not, such synonymising reflects the close integration between the redeemed human spirit and the divine that underpins WoF teaching on divine health and results in the healing feature of the WoF system.

For Hagin, the corollary to his understanding of spiritually healing is the curse of sickness: ‘According to Deuteronomy 28...all sickness and disease is a curse of the law. But, praise God, according to Galatians 3:13, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law!’¹⁵⁴ In other words, since sin entered the world through the fall and since sin is the root of sickness, the atoning work of Christ provides the necessary redemption to solve the problem of the curse as it pertains to sickness and healing.¹⁵⁵ Hagin’s view of atonement centres on the ‘death, burial and resurrection of Jesus’.¹⁵⁶ But the definitions attached to the terms

¹⁵² Ibid., 16.

¹⁵³ Hagin, *The Key to Scriptural Healing*, 33. Original capitalisation retained.

¹⁵⁴ *God's Medicine*, 33rd printing, (1996) ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1977), 38.

¹⁵⁵ Hejzlar, *Two Paradigms for Divine Healing*, 73.

¹⁵⁶ Hagin, *Bible Prayer Study Guide*, 116, 68, 95.

‘death’ and ‘burial’ reflect the impact of trichotomy on WoF. Indeed, the distinction of death and burial is a signpost towards the JDS doctrine.¹⁵⁷

For Hagin and Kenyon, the act at the centre of the atoning work of the cross was not primarily physical: ‘God did not deal with sickness physically. Disease today is spiritual’.¹⁵⁸ Rather, atonement healing viewed through the interpretative lens of trichotomy reads the atonement healing Scriptures of the source-base somewhat differently: “‘He was wounded for our transgressions.” This was spiritual. “He was bruised for our iniquities”. It was a spiritual bruising.’¹⁵⁹ Through the lens of trichotomy, the torture of the crucifixion takes place across all three planes – spirit, soul and body – and as a result it becomes a multi-dimensional atonement resulting in redemption from sin as well as the physical fruit of original sin, sickness. Since that reading casts the physical death of Jesus as a spiritual as well as physical act that unlocks the physical healing of the believer, corresponding spiritual atoning actions are required for the other dimensions of the human constitution. In other words, according to that belief, the Messiah’s spirit and soul are required to experience their own spiritual deaths in order to atone and bring life to humanity across the whole of the trichotomy.¹⁶⁰ For Christ to atone for the fallen human spirit, the suggestion is that a descent into the death of hell would be necessary.¹⁶¹ Hagin and Kenyon pay far less attention to how the atoning work takes place in the psychological or soul realm. However, Pavel Hejzlar’s notes Agnes Sandford’s view of Christ’s emotional travail as the ‘redemptive act of Gethsemane’, adding: ‘In Gethsemane Jesus changed from one who triumphs over death to one who is subject to

¹⁵⁷ See Chapter 6.

¹⁵⁸ E. W. Kenyon, *Jesus the Healer* (1940), 29.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ God “dealt with man’s body, and with his soul, and spirit. He laid our iniquities and our diseases on Jesus.” Ibid., 60.

¹⁶¹ See chapter 6. “He went to hell that we might go to Heaven.” Ibid., 30.

untold suffering' in a substitutional act of 'identification with our griefs and sorrows'.¹⁶²

There are spiritual implications too. WoF argues that the divine healing of the physical body is provided in the work of the cross. However, repeated references to the fall of the human spirit within the trichotomy, as well as the suggestion that Christ's Good Friday work corresponds to the body, point to a multi-dimensional atonement necessitating different atoning acts for the three dimensions of humanity (spirit, soul and body). If Christ's death at Calvary provided healing for the body, and if some other event – perhaps Gethsemane – provided healing for the soul, which 'death' provided healing of the human spirit? The ultimate endpoint of an anthropological trichotomy that separates out the different dimensions of humanity is that the human spirit and soul need a substitute spirit and soul to die vicariously in their stead, a belief that provides the impulse for the JDS doctrine.

Conclusion

WoF leverages the reading of the atonement it derived from its Healing movement and early Pentecostal forebears as a means of supporting a universally positive understanding of divine healing, an understanding that also provides the basis for further developments in the construction of an emerging system. However, WoF's reading of atonement healing is itself processed through the interpretative prisms provided by the other identified theological features. The result is that divine healing is a product of the preceding immaterial phase and provides the basis for subsequent features.

WoF's healing source base (primarily McCrossan, Bosworth and Nelson via Hagin) regard divine, physical healing as provided-for in the atonement. Hagin retains the certainty relating to God's will associated with such beliefs, but also integrates them into the WoF

¹⁶² Hejzlar, *Two Paradigms for Divine Healing*, 77. In Hejzlar's work, Sandford's theology of healing is generally contrasted with WoF sources such as Bosworth and Hagin. However, in this instance Sandford's words provide an example of substitutional atonement relating to the soul.

thought-world. For Hagin, and via Hagin the rest of the WoF movement, healing is less a pneumatic phenomenon accessed experientially and more about the manifestation of a spiritual reality promised by Scripture and obtained by faith. However, despite the movement's emphasis on the role of the human spirit, by viewing atonement healing through the interpretative lens provided by trichotomy, WoF also opens the possibility for a multi-dimensional view of healing in the atonement relating to the spirit, soul and body as opposed to just the body or just the spirit.

Since WoF healing is based on a completed act of atonement and a spiritually complete redemption, WoF healing teaching primarily emphasizes the physical dimension of the redemptive work of calvary as pertaining to the body. WoF's emphasis on the physical dimension does not exclude the moral and spiritual impact of the physical atonement, but the resulting implication is that a WoF system rigidly connected to such a view would require further atoning acts for the soul (and therefore psychological and emotional dimensions of humanity) as well as for the human spirit. Similarly, such spiritual redemption suggests a third corresponding atonement episode – a spiritual death of Jesus – which itself leads to questions relating to the scope of the atonement and redemption in WoF teaching.¹⁶³

Healing is situated at a crucial transitional point in the WoF system (after trichotomy, faith and positive confession) where it is cast as a physical outcome of the preceding immaterial features. Specifically, analysis of WoF healing and its connection to a tri-dimensional atonement is unsustainable without a pre-supposed trichotomous world view. Likewise, the notions of faith underpinning the movement's doctrines of faith and positive confession rest on the same basis. With sickness seen as a result of the fall and the fruit of a disrupted trichotomy, and with redeemed believers representing a re-aligned trichotomy with faith and positive confession the means of physically manifesting the spiritually inherited

¹⁶³ See Chapter 6.

promised of healing, healing proceeds from and is reliant upon trichotomy, faith and positive confession. However, WoF's repeated emphasis on the provision of scriptural promises in the atonement is not limited to physical healing, but rather the believed promises of God. And therefore, there is room in the system for other products of the trichotomy, faith and positive confession combination in parallel with healing. What those products are and how they relate to healing is the subject of the next chapter.

Significant questions relating to suffering and understanding of the trinity remain in WoF's theology of healing.¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that WoF's complex thesis that the spiritual root of sickness requires substitutionary atonement across all three realms of the humanity, while not without its own weaknesses, contradicts criticism such as Pett's dismissal of WoF's reading of atonement as 'incapable of meaning or intelligibility'.¹⁶⁵

Many of the weaknesses with WoF healing theology pertain to the movement's view of trichotomy as opposed to its reliance on atonement healing. However, if WoF's hierarchical trichotomous anthropology is replaced with a more triune approach to the human constitution these can begin being addressed – something that would positively impact the other interrelated features. Were that the case, there would be no less room for acquiring, receiving and manifesting the promises of God than in the more problematic hierarchical model. Furthermore, read in this triune way, both the pneumatic and faith modes of healing ministry found in Hagin's teaching remain available but without the internal enmity of the hierarchical trichotomy and without the danger of a works-based model that deviates from the grace and faith of the gospel.¹⁶⁶

WoF healing operates on a largely individualist and anthropocentric basis. And that

¹⁶⁴ See 4.2.3.

¹⁶⁵ Petts, "Healing and the Atonement," 288.

¹⁶⁶ Kate Bowler, "Daily Grind: The Spiritual Workday of the American Prosperity Gospel," *Journal of Cultural Economy* 8 (2015).

emphasis on individual believers results from a reading of the atonement that generally focuses on individual rather than corporate healing as well as human healing rather than the healing of ecology and creation.¹⁶⁷ And yet, WoF's own emphasis on the creative power of divine speech modelled after God's verbal creation in Genesis 1 is inherently outward-focused and intrinsically connected to both ecology and creation. Nevertheless, WoF atonement healing teaching is generally anthropocentric, implying that the atonement fulfils the necessary requirements to provide for the promises of God for the purpose of manifestation of the products of atonement in believing humans. That emphasis on the individual human perspective reflects Hagin's distinction between what might be called pneumatic healing and healing by faith. In his view, healing by faith is more normative in the life of the individual believer (see 4.1.2).

Meanwhile, the Assemblies of God's emphasis that healing is 'provided for' in the atonement, a view that was itself originated by the WoF source base,¹⁶⁸ opens the door for further provision-orientated readings. Having historically begun with divine healing, WoF trichotomy combined with the anthropocentric orientation of the movement's reading of atonement, in conjunction with the rest of the system, points towards the belief in the divinely supported manifestation of other material requirements, for other apparent deficiencies to be *healed* in the atonement. The most obvious of these is poverty, something Hagin teaches believers are *redeemed* from.¹⁶⁹ In other words, WoF atonement healing teaching provides a key impetus for prosperity teaching and its underpinning vocabulary of healing and redemption as pre-paid promises.

Prior to healing, the preceding doctrinal features interact in a largely linear fashion,

¹⁶⁷ Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 156.

¹⁶⁸ See 4.1, especially 4.1.2.

¹⁶⁹ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*.

with each subsequent feature relying on the preceding features. The emergence of the healing narrative marks a new phase in the interconnected framework. There are two clear options for how the narrative function of divine healing could operate in relation to subsequent features, but each must be able to run back and forth across the interconnected features in order for them to be described as an effective overall narrative.

First, each product (healing and prosperity) could be seen as broadly similar in importance to healing as a narrative. For example, WoF theology could describe salvation as the healing of a sinner or financial provision as the healing of poverty in the life of a believer in a similar manner to the healing of the body. It could also work in a similar manner read through the prosperity narrative and physical restoration could be described as health prosperity, for example.

Second, healing could be described as the parental narrative from which the prosperity narrative was born. In that case, prosperity itself would have to be read as a type of healing or a fruit of healing as opposed to healing issuing from prosperity.

Healing would appear to have a stronger argument for being the primary narrative, issuing from the immaterial phase identified in the chapters 1 to 3 because – as the historical evolution of the theological system repeatedly shows – atonement healing precedes subsequent belief in financial prosperity both historically and theologically. Therefore, subsequent analysis of prosperity in the next chapter and the Jesus Died Spiritually (JDS) doctrine after that (in chapter 6) give further attention to those points.

Specifically, since WoF's understanding of divine healing brings with it a multi-dimensional understanding of substitutionary atonement, it provides momentum towards the reapplication of the same principles in other dimensions of the trichotomy, which opens the door for JDS.¹⁷⁰ At the same time, WoF's insistence that healing is provided for in the

¹⁷⁰ See Chapter 6.

atonement leads to other material outcomes, most notably temporal material financial provision or prosperity – the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: PROSPERITY

Prosperity teaching is a predominant problem in WoF. It is problematic for at least four reasons. First, because the term is used in a range of different ways by different sources – is prosperity a theological feature, a worldview or a praxis? Second, there are numerous well-documented examples of prosperity-related controversy.¹ Third, the theology underpinning prosperity teaching has been strongly contested.² And fourth, because prosperity has been used as shorthand for WoF movement, its protagonists and its theology (prosperity churches, prosperity preachers and prosperity gospel respectively) as if the term represents an overarching narrative for the WoF movement and its theology. But does the historical development of WoF and theological structure of WoF support the suggestion that prosperity is an overarching narrative?

If prosperity is a product of the interconnected features of WoF identified so far, birthed out of the evolution of the movement's theological lineage, as I argue in this chapter, the suggestion that prosperity represents an overarching narrative is flawed because a product or an effect cannot determine and describe itself prior to its existence. Therefore, this chapter advances a historical contextualisation and analysis of WoF prosperity teaching in light of trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing in order to address the four identified problems associated with WoF prosperity theology.

¹ There are many examples, but here are just two reasonably recent ones: Michael Brice-Saddler, "A Wealthy Televangelist Explains His Fleet of Private Jets: 'It's a Biblical Thing'," *The Washington Post*, 3 June 2019. Kathy Lohr, "Senator Probes Megachurches' Finances," *NPR* 2007.

² McConnell, *The Promise*. Fee, *The Disease of the Health & Wealth Gospels*. Smail, Walker, and Wright, "Revelation Knowledge." Neumann, "The Cultic Origins of Word-Faith Theology in the Charismatic Movement."

5.1 Re-reading the Word of Faith prosperity source base

Most research has approached prosperity as a central facet of WoF and much has already been said on the subject.³ Criticisms of prosperity centering on the Kenyon connection thesis that originated with McConnell represent a well-travelled path in the field of WoF research.⁴ Therefore, my research seeks to highlight the undiscovered and under-reported roots of American WoF prosperity theology and the critical role that those sources play both in shaping prosperity theology and prosperity's theological function in relation to trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing in the WoF context. For the same reason, my analysis of prosperity also refers to the existing secondary scholarship on prosperity rather than retreading the same steps.

Prosperity, like healing before it, is an undeniably predominant feature of WoF and the term 'prosperity gospel' is often used as shorthand for WoF belief in general.⁵ I follow Attanasi's observation that 'Health and wealth teachings define prosperity as more than material well-being' although I also agree that 'material aspects are often disproportionately emphasized.'⁶ The preceding chapters of this thesis argue that prosperity – the belief that it is God's will to bless believers through temporal material provision – does not stand alone in the WoF movement's arrangement of interconnected beliefs. Rather, WoF appears to arrive at its prosperity beliefs by a similar route to divine healing, via the understanding that it (prosperity) is provided to the believer on the basis of the atonement and manifested by faith.

³ For example: McConnell, *The Promise*. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*. Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*. Kate Bowler, "Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel" (Duke University, 2010); Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*. Andreas Heuser, "Prosperity Theology: Material Abundance and Praxis of Transformation," in *The Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, ed. Wolfgang Vondey (Taylor & Francis Group, 2020).

⁴ While later accounts are more nuanced, from McConnell to Bowler, the core of the Kenyon-connection thesis remains intact, with most sources drawing theological conclusions from McConnell's debatable history. See McConnell, *The Promise*. Bowler, "Blessed."

⁵ McConnell, *The Promise*. Barron, *The Health and Wealth Gospel*. Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*. Bowler, *Blessed*. Brogdon, *The New Pentecostal Message?*

⁶ Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 4.

That could mean prosperity is a product of the preceding trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing features of WoF and is to some extent reliant on them. Such a conclusion would counter suggestions that WoF is driven by prosperity teaching and that WoF and prosperity are synonymous terms. Other options are that the development of prosperity follows a similar path to healing, evolving in parallel with healing from the first three features; or that prosperity is a product of healing that occurs separately to the preceding features.

Throughout this chapter I use the word prosperity to refer to the WoF doctrine of divinely-provided material beneficence – especially the belief that redemption from poverty is part of the atonement. I do not use it as a shorthand for overall WoF theology for at least two reasons: First, because I argue that it is a product of the preceding features and not vice versa; and second, because I analyse it as a particular theological feature in its own right rather than a catch-all term for other quite different features such as acquisitive faith or positive confession.⁷

This chapter asks: is the hypothetical WoF system so dependent on prosperity that WoF is a prosperity gospel or is prosperity teaching a product of the preceding features of a WoF system? Furthermore, if it is a product of the preceding features, can prosperity be redeemed – so to speak – and re-articulated as a ‘faith and hope gospel’, as Peter White and Rachel Pauline Aikins characterise it, or – in its ideal form – a ‘gospel of blessing’, as Wonsuk Ma also asks?⁸

Many secondary sources are somewhat less accommodating in their assessment of prosperity teaching. WoF’s suggestion that God promises material blessing to the faithful

⁷ Lovett, "Positive Confession Theology."

⁸ Peter Aikins White; Rachel Pauline, "Name It, Claim It, Grab It: African Neo-Pentecostal Faith and Hope Gospel," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 30 (2021). Ma, "Blessing in Pentecostal Theology," 291.

represents a heretical theological ‘disease’ for Fee and McConnell.⁹ McConnell’s thesis (and many that issue from it) are heavily reliant on the argument that Kenyon integrated ‘cultic doctrine’ into his understanding of Christianity in a bid to respond to the supposed ‘challenges’ of Christian Science and New Thought.¹⁰ The North American New Thought metaphysical movement began in the late 19th century when its pioneers including Phineas Quimby preached on the power of positive thinking to effect material change including the promise of financial success. For some, the New Thought movement’s pairing of such blessings with positive thinking and verbal affirmations was enough to draw a direct line between New Thought and key WoF source, Kenyon.¹¹ However, while New Thought saw itself as offering health and wealth in a Christian sense,¹² some of the movement’s own chroniclers are content to link New Thought to Gnosticism as opposed to mainstream Christianity.¹³

The Kenyon-connection, as the argument that Kenyon repackaged New Thought in the form of Kenyon’s proto-WoF teaching is known,¹⁴ further suggests that Kenyon’s teaching was transmitted to Hagin and therefore the metaphysical sects represent the source of WoF teaching, especially the movement’s prosperity theology.¹⁵ Hagin’s repeated reproduction of Kenyon is not in question, but arguments relating to the influence of the metaphysical cults on both Kenyon and Hagin are far more debatable.¹⁶ On the other hand, as we have seen in the preceding chapters, re-examining the historical roots of Hagin’s theology

⁹ Fee, *The Disease of the Health & Wealth Gospels*. McConnell, *The Promise*, 170.

¹⁰ *The Promise*, 174.

¹¹ Lovett, "Positive Confession Theology.", 719.

¹² Horatio Dresser, W., *A History of the New Thought Movement* (New York: Thomas T Crowell Company, 1919).

¹³ Jeffrey Michael Chaffin, "The New Thought Movement: An Analysis and Comparison to 1st and 2nd Century Christianity " (Penn State University).

¹⁴ McConnell, *The Promise*, 30.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 171-75.

¹⁶ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 83. Riss, "Kenyon, Essek William." Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity*, 219.

repeatedly reveals evangelical and Pentecostal sources reproduced in a similar way to Kenyon. The paucity of evidence connecting Hagin's writings to New Thought paired with the plentiful evidence of pre-Pentecostal and Pentecostal sources in Hagin's writings on trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing necessitate the evaluation of whether or not the same stream is the source of Hagin's prosperity teaching. In that case, WoF is better described as broadly Pentecostal as opposed to an example of New Thought syncretism. Since many of the movement's criticisms rely on arguments relating to the 'roots and shoots' of WoF teaching,¹⁷ re-reading the roots of WoF prosperity teaching provides the opportunity to identify direct influences on key source material and confirm or refute supposed continuity with non-New Thought sources, potentially lending further support to the central claim of my research, that WoF is a system of six theological features all of which have been inherited from early- and pre-Pentecostal sources.

Once the origins of Hagin's prosperity teaching have been contextualised, the theology itself must be critically evaluated in light of the preceding theological features. Analysing WoF prosperity theology as it pertains to trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing offers opportunities as potentially fruitful as they are complex and controversial. In order to address that complexity, Amos Yong suggests we consider how WoF prosperity fits in the spectrum of 'Prosperity theologies' rather than assuming that prosperity beliefs are isolated or monolithic.¹⁸ From here, based on Yong's suggestion, we can examine the fundamentals of WoF prosperity and how prosperity functions in relation to the other features of WoF.

Therefore, this chapter contextualises WoF prosperity teaching by examining its historical origins as a means of understanding how the term is used within the movement and

¹⁷ An approach that at least one source described as a "genetic fallacy", see: De Arteaga, *Quenching the Spirit*, 244-46.

¹⁸ Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 27.

its source base as well as what theological implications such an understanding brings. In order to do all that, the contextualisation traces the history of WoF prosperity theology by using the writings of populariser Kenneth E. Hagin as an entry point. Beyond that, the role and function of WoF's prosperity theology are analysed in relation to trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing. Since healing was found to be both a product of trichotomy, faith and positive confession as well as a potential narrative, prosperity's position and function in relation to those features and its potential status as an overarching narrative are also critically evaluated.

5.1.1 The origins of Word of Faith prosperity theology

As in previous chapters, this contextualisation focuses on written materials and emphasises the importance of demonstrable historical sources despite the fact that Hagin testifies that he received his understanding of prosperity directly from Jesus.¹⁹ There are two reasons for this approach: First, because such visions and revelations are un-attestable; and second, because as we have seen in the preceding chapters, Hagin's writing repeatedly reproduces written source material, often without attribution. Understanding the connections between Hagin and his human source-base helps us understand his and the WoF movement's historical and theological context. With that in mind, this chapter begins its quest for contextualisation at the beginning, with the question: what is the earliest non-biblical source material Hagin uses?

An obvious starting point is to begin with references to Kenyon since Kenyon-connection arguments have been repeatedly made.²⁰ However, there are two main reasons I avoid Kenyon in this chapter. First, because the specific evidence of an influential connection

¹⁹ Kenneth E. Hagin, *How God Taught Me About Prosperity*, 2013 electronic ed. (Broken Arrow, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1985).

²⁰ Arguments for a Kenyon-New Thought connection range from McConnell's decisive conclusive to more nuanced readings such as Kate Bowler's assessment that Kenyon "appropriated metaphysical religion more selectively and 'evangelically' than McConnell and others have detailed." Bowler, "Blessed," 32n9.

between New Thought and WoF via Kenyon is absent from Kenyon and Hagin's literature. And second, because prosperity was not a particularly strong emphasis in Kenyon's published writings.²¹ Rather, I begin my contextualisation by avoiding the assumption that Kenyon was the sole or even main source of Hagin's prosperity teaching. Instead, I approach the question of origins by asking which sources Hagin drew on in the formation of his prosperity teaching.

Outside the Bible, the historically earliest prosperity literature Kenneth E. Hagin refers to is T. S. Lincott's *The Path to Wealth* (1882), a passage from which is quoted across three pages of Hagin's *The Midas Touch*, which was published in 2000 towards the end of Hagin's life.²² As the sub-title suggests, Lincott's book establishes a link between 'cash and Christianity' by making the case for tithing and 'systematic beneficence' and explicitly argues that 'God pledges Himself for the financial success of that individual who renders obedience to the Divine money claim'.²³ In other words, those believers that give 10 per cent of their income in line with Malachi 3:10 can expect divinely bestowed financial wealth in the present age. The language of such a 'Divine money claim' is reminiscent of WoF acquisitive faith and therefore represents an initial indication that prosperity teaching, from some of the earliest sources in the movement's pre-history, was taught in association with at least one of the other WoF features.²⁴

The fact that the historically earliest source of prosperity teaching cited by Hagin was

²¹ Michael Vincent, "The Formation of a Prosperity Theology That Takes Full Account of an 'Ideal' Considered Hermeneutical Strategy in the Light of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Hermeneutics of Word-Faith and Non-Word-Faith Prosperity Teaching" (*University of Middlesex*, 2016), 23, 26.

²² Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 69-71.

Lincott, *The Path to Wealth*.

²³ *The Path to Wealth*, 121.

²⁴ Lincott draws a direct connection between tithing and personal prosperity, utilising seed-related language: "...God distinctly states that giving money to His cause bears the same relation to wealth as giving seed to the ground does to a plentiful harvest...God promises dollars for dollars...if a man has faith enough in God's promises to sow the proper amount of wealth seed" and "the tithe is the seed money of wealth". *Ibid.*, 84, 134.

published in 1882 situates the origins of WoF prosperity teaching in parallel with the nineteenth-century North American divine healing movement, a point that reinforces the many connections between that period and WoF already identified in preceding chapters (see 4.1.3). It also raises the question of the extent to which similar theological grounds are given to different promises of provision. Specifically, is the atonement seen as the ultimate source of WoF's confidence in the provision of material blessing as it is with divine healing?

In contrast with those relatively early roots, Hagin's *The Midas Touch* was published in 2000, just three years before Kenneth E. Hagin died and therefore comes during a period in which Hagin sought to correct what he deemed to be excesses in the prosperity message amongst those who respected him. And despite the extent to which Lincott is quoted in *The Midas Touch*, there are no references to his work in Hagin's writings prior to 2000. That lack of earlier references to Lincott in Hagin's published writings and Lincott's introduction into Hagin's published corpus towards the end of Hagin's life suggest that Lincott was not a particularly major source of his prosperity teaching. Furthermore, while Lincott is clearly a kind of prosperity advocate, there are significant differences between Lincott's approach as a passionate advocate of tithing and Hagin's foundational beliefs in trichotomy, faith, positive confession and atonement healing. Nevertheless, Hagin's citation of Lincott does establish a completely non-New Thought lineage of prosperity teaching originating in pre-Pentecostal North American (in this case Canadian) evangelical circles.

In contrast with his later citation of Lincott, Hagin's earlier writing contains a greater number of more integral citations to early Pentecostal sources. Due to their earlier position in the chronology of WoF development, these are more likely to be the true sources of Hagin and WoF's prosperity emphasis. The most overt influence on Hagin's prosperity teaching was early Pentecostal missionary to China A. A. Swift who – unlike Lincott – receives repeated citation both at the end of Hagin's life and at the height of the WoF movement's

expansion in the 1980s. Swift's history and specifically his Chinese missionary experience is key to understanding his theology of prosperity, which in turn impacted Hagin's theology of prosperity.

The clearest references to a specific source of Hagin's prosperity teaching are found in *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness and Spiritual Death*, which was first published more than three decades earlier than *The Midas Touch* in 1966 and was inspired by discussions with Swift that took place in the mid-1950s.²⁵ My reading of Hagin's *The Spirit Within & the Spirit upon* in parallel with Swift's *The Spirit Within and upon* reveals that much of the first half of Hagin's book is an unattributed reproduction of Swift's work.²⁶ With that in mind, Hagin's decision to refer to Swift by name in *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness and Spiritual Death* suggests that even more of the substance of Hagin's teaching in that book originates with Swift. Either way, Swift is clearly a strong – and hitherto generally unacknowledged – source of Hagin's work. The strong influence of Swift on Hagin combined with the direct relevance of the text to the origins of WoF prosperity teaching means re-reading Hagin's *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness and Spiritual Death* in light of Swift is key to understanding prosperity as a theological feature of WoF.

Within the pages of *Redeemed from Poverty*... Swift's testimony of abundant divine financial provision to support his work as a missionary in China (as recounted by Hagin) plays a key role in establishing Hagin's rationale for prosperity. Indeed, Hagin uses Swift's testimony as an example of what Yong calls the 'missional argument' in favour of prosperity – that is, that finances are provided to believers for the purposes of evangelism.²⁷ Building on that premise, Hagin uses Swift's reported support of Hagin's understanding in order to further

²⁵ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 9.

²⁶ Compare: Allan A. Swift, *The Spirit within and upon* (Green Lane, Pennsylvania: Maranatha Park, n.d.). Hagin, *The Spirit within & the Spirit upon*.

²⁷ *Redeemed from Poverty*, 10-12. Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 21.

buttress Hagin's pro-prosperity position. Hagin specifically reports that Swift said: 'Brother Hagin, you are absolutely right... You ought to preach that everywhere you go. God has promised to make every one of us rich.'²⁸ Hagin's reporting of that exchange takes the concept of material provision a step further than general or even systematic material beneficence. Rather than supporting a broad concept of material provision or blessing, Hagin suggests that Swift supported his particular view that prosperity – and specifically a state of being 'rich' – is normative in the life of the believer, with Hagin quoting Swift as saying: 'God has promised to make every one of us rich'.²⁹ Elsewhere, Hagin is explicit that being rich does not necessarily equate to being a millionaire, defining rich as being 'abundantly provided for'.³⁰ Since Hagin's account of his engagement with Swift plays such key role in both the historical development of Hagin's prosperity teaching and acts as support for Hagin's prosperity emphasis, further scrutiny of the historicity of Hagin's account of Swift's missionary and ministry testimony is warranted.

Allan A. Swift was a Canadian missionary to Yunnan, China who served as part of the Pentecostal Mission Union (PMU) between 1913 and about 1921.³¹ A graduate of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) Nyack Bible College in New York and a former leader of Bethel Pentecostal Assembly in Newark,³² by 1914 Swift and his wife Carrie had become the PMU's first China field superintendents.³³ However, Allan Swift was still the only ordained missionary in their number.³⁴ And letters between Swift and PMU representatives demonstrate a number of tensions between the UK-based leadership of the

²⁸ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 10.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Biblical Keys to Financial Prosperity*, 7th printing, 2007 edition ed. (Broken Arrow, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1995), 30.

³¹ Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires* (London: SCM Press, 2007), 128-29.

³² Ibid., 129.

³³ Ibid., 128.

³⁴ John Andrews, "The Pentecostal Mission Union: A Brief History," *Assemblies of God Heritage* 24 (2004): 19.

PMU and the missionaries on the ground in China. Questions of finance and funding the missionary work were amongst the foremost points of conflict and were regular subjects of correspondence.³⁵ The theological significance of such a historical context is that Swift also emerges as a key source of prosperity teaching, influential to the development of the WoF movement's understanding of prosperity and that Swift receives his revelation as a North American missionary to China in the early twentieth century.

Theologically, Allan Swift's writings contain evidence of evangelical and early Pentecostal influences. Specifically, Swift's Pentecostal Missions Union (PMU) application form states that – apart from the Bible – reading material he most esteemed included: 'Andrew Murray's works, CHM Notes on the Pentateuch',³⁶ as well as the Pentecostal periodicals *Confidence* and *Latter Rain Evangel*.³⁷ Such a reading list typifies the early Pentecostal position of being Spirit-filled but also seeking to find a theological position within the context of existing evangelical sources. One early indication of Swift's belief in divine financial provision can be found on the same PMU application form. On the subject of the financial support of his missionary work, when asked 'are you prepared to defray them yourself, or to look to God solely for them?', Swift answered: 'I will look solely to God for support', indicating that he believed God would provide his material and financial needs.³⁸ However, roughly three years after arriving in China in 1914, in January 1917 Swift wrote that 'in catering for others one is hard put to it not to go over one's [PMU] allowance' and therefore he and his family were in 'a little debt'.³⁹ Indeed, this tension between a belief that

³⁵ Allan A. Swift, "Letter to Mundell", 22nd January 1916. PMU Archives, Donald Gee Centre, Pentecostal and Charismatic Research Archives, University Southern California, <https://digitallibrary.usc.edu/Archive/Pentecostal-and-Charismatic-Research-Archive>. Swift, "Letter to Mundell" 22nd August 1918.

³⁶ Probably C. H. Mackintosh.

³⁷ Allan A. Swift, "Pentecostal Missions Union Missionary Application Form," PMU (Pentecostal and Charismatic Research Archive (the Donald Gee Centre Collection), 1913).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Allan A. Swift, "Letter to Mundell", 1917, PMU Archives.

God would provide Swift's material needs as a missionary and the challenges of his experience in China provides the backdrop for Hagin's later interaction with Swift, conversations that Hagin credits as both a source of and support for his prosperity teaching. Analyses of prosperity theology have so far overlooked the connections between Swift and Hagin and WoF.⁴⁰ Therefore, both Hagin's conversations with Swift and Swift's Chinese missionary experience provide a significant contribution to understanding WoF's reading of prosperity.

Writing in both *The Midas Touch* and *Redeemed from the Curse of Poverty...*, Hagin explicitly identifies his conversations with Swift and details Swift's experiences in China as the source of his general understanding of prosperity.⁴¹ In addition, Swift is identified as the source of Hagin's belief that prosperity should be seen as a form of redemption: 'Brother Swift got out his notes on the subject of prosperity and gave them to me... Later I wrote a book entitled *Redeemed from the Curse of Poverty, Sickness, and Spiritual Death* based in part on the excellent study notes he gave me.'⁴² Since the Hagins repeatedly used completely unattributed or very loosely attributed citations of Kenyon, MacMillan, Bosworth, Nuzum, Nelson and Swift throughout their writings, particular attention should be paid to the occasions when Hagin chooses to acknowledge his sources. Considering Hagin's almost completely unattributed reproduction of Swift's *The Spirit Within...* and P. C. Nelson's *The Woman Question* (see 4.1.3), Hagin's acknowledgement of the direct influence of Swift's notes on *Redeemed from the Curse of Poverty, Sickness, and Spiritual Death* contrasts strongly and could even indicate that portions of Hagin's book are again virtually identical to Swift's writings.

⁴⁰ Swift is not mentioned in any of the following prominent prosperity research: McConnell, *A Different Gospel*. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*. Bowler, *Blessed*. Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*. Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement*.

⁴¹ Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 40. *Redeemed from Poverty*, 9-12.

⁴² *Midas Touch*, 40.

However, while Hagin's acknowledgement may indicate very close similarities between Hagin and Swift's prosperity teaching, there are significant differences between the details of Swift's account of his Chinese missionary experience as recorded in Swift's letters to the PMU and Hagin's reporting of Swift's conversational reports of the same period. For example, Hagin reports that in 1954, while talking with Swift on the subject of prosperity, Swift confirmed the validity of Hagin's views on that teaching by saying: 'I received that revelation in 1911 in China.'⁴³ However, Allan and Carrie Swift applied to become PMU missionaries in China in 1913 and did not arrive in China until 1914.⁴⁴ Therefore, Hagin's 1911 dating must be wrong. Furthermore, Swift's report of being in debt in 1917 is somewhat incongruent with Hagin's suggestion that Swift received a prosperity revelation in 1911. Indeed, issues relating to the over-stretched finances of the PMU's China operation were a regular part of Swift's correspondence during his time as a missionary.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, Swift's apparent encouragement of Hagin's prosperity message reflects the degree of influence Swift had on Hagin: 'When my meeting in Brother Swift's church was over...this respected man of God said to me, Brother Hagin, preach that [prosperity] message everywhere you go.'⁴⁶ In a separate recollection of this exchange, Hagin cites Swift as adding 'God has promised to make every one of us rich' to the end of that sentence.⁴⁷ Both quotes suggest Hagin greatly valued Swift's endorsement and further emphasise the importance of analysing the historical and theological implications of that exchange.

Hagin portrays his 1954 preaching trip to the Trinity Pentecostal Church in New Jersey that Swift pastored at the time as a turning point for his own prosperity teaching: 'I wasn't preaching along these lines in those days...I knew it was true, but *nobody else was*

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 128-29.

⁴⁵ Leigh Goodwin, "The Pentecostal Missionary Union (PMU): A Case Study Exploring the Missiological Roots of Early British Pentecostalism (1909-1925)" (University of Chester, 2013), 225.

⁴⁶ Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 40.

⁴⁷ *Redeemed from Poverty*, 10.

preaching that God had redeemed us from the curse of poverty... Knowing Brother Swift was a man of God, an old-timer in Pentecost considered to be one of the most outstanding Full Gospel Bible teachers, I talked to him about some of these Scriptures'.⁴⁸ Swift's answer, as reported by Hagin, was: 'Brother Hagin, you are absolutely right'.⁴⁹ Hagin's suggestion that nobody else was preaching prosperity understood in terms of redemption is a particularly significant detail because, as Hagin's citation of Lincott demonstrates, various kinds of general prosperity teaching were evident at least 70 years earlier. And therefore, the theological developments Hagin highlights are related to the specific belief that prosperity equated to God's redemption of believers from the curse of poverty and that, since prosperity is redemption-based, prosperity should be normative for Christians.

The recollection of the 1954 meeting between Swift and Hagin recounted in Hagin's *Redeemed From the Curse of Poverty...* adds considerably more detail to Hagin's account of Swift's revelation of prosperity while a missionary: 'I [Swift] received the Holy Spirit in 1908,⁵⁰ and in 1911 my wife and I went to China as missionaries. (That was way back before there was a Full Gospel organization or a Pentecostal circle.)'⁵¹ Reiterating the incorrect 1911 date, Hagin's reporting of this account thereby suggests Swift went to China either without support or without the support of a Pentecostal missionary body. However, there are no records of Swift making any earlier trips to China than his PMU-backed expedition. And the PMU clearly was a full-gospel organisation, contradicting Hagin's description of the Swift's context.

Hagin also identifies Swift as British, quoting Swift as saying: 'I was born and grew

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Allan Swift's PMU application form attests to the same year of his Spirit-baptism (1908), adding the detail that it took place specifically on 16th July. Interestingly, Carrie Swift testifies that she was baptised in the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues four years earlier in 1904.

⁵¹ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 10.

up in London, came over to Canada, and then to the United States',⁵² which suggests a generally unacknowledged British dimension to the origins of prosperity theology. Allan Swift's PMU application form supports Hagin's suggestion that Swift was British, with Swift noting that he was born in Walthamstow, Essex.⁵³ According to Hagin, it was due to Swift's upbringing that Swift 'had some connections in England', resulting in a 'mission there' – presumably the PMU – supporting Swift. 'They gave us \$1,236 a year. That's \$103 a month support. And we spent the year 1911, or most of it, in China as missionaries', Hagin recounts Swift as saying, once again re-iterating the problematic 1911 date.⁵⁴ The fact Swift was born in Britain combined with his connections to the PMU as missionary to China significantly internationalises the origins of North American prosperity teaching. It also raises questions relating to the theological impact of reading prosperity isolation of such important contextual details.

For Hagin, Swift's problems in China were two-fold: financial challenges and theological incongruity with the sending missionary agency. The solution was a Spirit-led resignation from Swift's employed ministry role, followed by the pioneering of new ministry organisation, endorsed by miraculous financial provision: 'Send in your resignation. If these people knew you believe in speaking with tongues, they wouldn't support you, because they don't believe speaking with tongues is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.'⁵⁵ The problem is that Swift's sending agency was Pentecostal and the PMU's initial evidence teaching was 'probably its most distinctive doctrine' plus affirmation to a personal experience of Spirit baptism was part of the PMU application process.⁵⁶ Therefore, Hagin's account of his conversation with Swift is impossible to reconcile with the historical record on that point.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Swift, "Pentecostal Missions Union Missionary Application Form."

⁵⁴ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 10.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Goodwin, "The Pentecostal Missionary Union (PMU): A Case Study Exploring the Missiological Roots of Early British Pentecostalism (1909-1925)," 118.

Hagin's recollection continues by reporting Swift's concerns relating to the material needs of wife and children, with Swift purportedly saying 'It would be rough enough to be in America without support in 1912, much less in China. What am I to do?'⁵⁷ According to Hagin, God answered Swift by telling the missionary to resign from his post: 'I want you to turn this mission station back to them. It wouldn't be right for you to steal it from them... You go over to another place and start a new work.'⁵⁸ 'Didn't you know I promised to make you rich?', Hagin reports Swift as testifying that God said.⁵⁹ The purpose of Hagin's recounting of Swift's testimony is to support his own argument in favour of redemption from the curse of poverty via the atonement. And therefore, the historicity of the testimony is also key to the theology. If the supporting testimony was found to contradict the redemption-from-poverty argument, prosperity's role in the theological system would also be undermined.

The accuracy of the dates reported by Hagin are clearly unreliable. However, a letter from Swift to Cecil Polhill dated 30 January 1919 suggests Swift was indeed planning to set-up a Bible training school in a relatively nearby part of China, Mengtsz, subsequent to resigning from the PMU. Over a year afterwards in March 1920, Swift writes again and reiterates his plans to move to Mengtsz. But, three months later, Swift reports that he will stay after all and not move. Finally, in July 1920, Swift offers his resignation again in order to establish a Bible School in an undisclosed location, adding that 'I wish to look to the Lord alone for the personal support of Mrs Swift and myself'.⁶⁰ Since Swift writes 'I feel strongly led of the Lord to do so' and 'I must now do what the Lord wants me to do', it seems likely that this is the occasion to which Hagin refers in *Redeemed From the Curse of Poverty, Sickness, and Spiritual Death*, despite Hagin's incorrect dates and confused understanding of

⁵⁷ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 11.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Allan A. Swift, "Letter to Thomas Mundell", 19th June 1920, PMU Archives.

the missionary context in China.

Hagin's account continues by reporting that Swift received a revelation of a particular scriptural justification of prosperity from God: 'Then the Spirit of the Lord asked, "Have you read Galatians 3:13,14 where it says Christ redeemed you from the curse of the law, being made a curse for you, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles; that is, on you? The first thing I promised Abraham was that I would make him rich."' ⁶¹ According to Hagin, that revelation resulted in Swift submitting his resignation and moving 'over to another place' where he 'began a new work'. ⁶² In other words, Hagin suggests Swift resigned from the PMU for two reasons: First, because he hadn't been forthcoming about his experience of speaking in tongues (something that is contradicted by Swift's PMU application form and somewhat irrelevant considering the PMU's stance on tongues); and second, because God told Swift to start a new missionary work and gave Swift the revelation that God promised to make him rich.

According to Swift's letters, Swift was still connected to the PMU until about 1921. Therefore, Hagin's repeated use of 1912 could simply be a typing error. Referring to what must be Swift's post-PMU period, Hagin continues: 'For the first six months of that year...it looked as if my wife and I and our two small children were going to starve to death in China, cut off from the support in England...When the year was over...God had given me \$3,750 in American dollars!...three times as much [as before]'. ⁶³ Again, the purpose of this part of Hagin's retelling of Swift's testimony is to support his view of prosperity in general and the his theology of redemption from poverty in particular. Therefore, lack of external evidence for this testimony or contradictory historical evidence has the effect of undermining the same argument.

⁶¹ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 11.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., 12.

Hagin's reference to 'two small children' is noteworthy because Swift's PMU correspondence shows that he was asking for support for educational fees for his six-year-old son in 1918. Indeed, since the suggested schools are, by his own admission, expensive, Swift is not simply requesting subsistence allowance. Rather, it is an example of a further-reaching understanding of prosperity in action. Once again, there are chronological issues with Hagin's account. Swift's son was the eldest of two children and was either not born or a new infant in 1912. And once again, Hagin's recollection of dates contradicts the record presented in Swift's PMU letters. By March 1923 Swift was hosting a 10-day revival meeting as pastor of Bethel Pentecostal Assembly in Newark, New Jersey.⁶⁴ Without further corroboration, the most reasonable explanation is that, after around eight years as a missionary in China, Swift resigned from the PMU in 1921 at some point between 1921 and 1923 went back to the USA to lead Bethel Pentecostal Assembly.

Moreover, other contemporary literature shows that Swift also influenced H. A. Baker, a missionary to China who ran an orphanage that witnessed a miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit amongst the boys that lived there, which resulted in the testimonies recorded in *Visions of Heaven*.⁶⁵ According to H. A. Baker, Allan and Carrie Swift prayed for Baker and his wife Josephine to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Swift also encouraged the Bakers to come to Yunnan Province and take over the mission the Swifts started after leaving the PMU.⁶⁶ These details are significant because they partially confirm Hagin's account that the Swifts did establish a second mission in China, which they ran for up to two years and because they also support Hagin's report that the Swifts experienced abundant material provision at that time. Indeed, the Bakers ended up living in the Swifts' old

⁶⁴ *Latter Rain Evangel*, March 1923, 13.

⁶⁵ Harold A. Baker, *Visions of Heaven* (New Kensington, Pennsylvania: Whitaker House, 1973). H. A. Baker's grandson Rolland is married to Heidi Baker the founder and leader of Iris Ministries, a missionary organisation that has planted thousands of churches in Mozambique and has likewise witnessed the miraculous.

⁶⁶ *Under His Wings*, Iris 2008 Edition ed. (Iris Ministries, 2008), 171.

house and described it as ‘a spacious house with plenty of living room upstairs but nothing nice’ that would attract the attention of robbers.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the Swifts made arrangements for the Bakers to receive \$1000 of financial support, which is roughly equivalent to \$15,500 today.⁶⁸ Both points broadly support Hagin’s testimony that the Swifts experienced remarkable financial provision in China in a short space of time, despite leaving the support of the PMU in their last couple of years as missionaries. And therefore, Swift’s testimony does go some way towards serving its purpose in Hagin’s writing – to support and exemplify their particular brand of prosperity theology. And despite Hagin’s errors and embellishments in his retelling of Swift’s testimony, the historical record found in Swift’s PMU letters and H. A. Baker’s testimony does not contradict Hagin’s reports that Swift adhered to a general belief in prosperity. Neither does the historical record contradict the suggestion that Swift was the source of Hagin’s specific belief in prosperity as a redemption from poverty.

5.1.2 Atonement, Redemption and Prosperity

The term *prosperity theology* generally covers a range of disparate versions of the belief in divine material provision.⁶⁹ In order to focus my subsequent theological analysis, this section seeks to further identify what kind of prosperity is espoused by WoF and to describe its relation to WoF notions of atonement and redemption. The answer to these questions both clarifies the meaning of such a widely and yet imprecisely used term and re-iterates the interconnected and systematic nature of WoF teaching as well as its dependence on the preceding features.

Since Swift was both a foundational source of Hagin’s prosperity teaching as well as a

⁶⁷ Ibid., 173.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 172. Cf. Baker, *Visions of Heaven*, 6.

⁶⁹ Bowler, "Blessed," 51. Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 27. Ma, "Blessing in Pentecostal Theology." White, "Name It, Claim It, Grab It."

vindicating voice supporting Hagin's particular brand of redemption-based prosperity, the Swift-Hagin connection offers a continuing entry point for this part of the contextualisation. However, as we have seen in previous chapters, WoF draws on a broader source base than Hagin alone. And, engaging with a broader group of influences on WoF will also help analyse the position and the theological function of prosperity in relation to the other identified features of WoF. Nevertheless, I continue to refer to the writings of proto-WoF sources in addition to Swift as a means of identifying prosperity's role and function in relation to trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing and as a way of plotting the ongoing theological trajectory.

Swift's take on prosperity originated in a missionary context and is grounded in the language of redemption. Since redemption is reliant on atonement, and since Bosworth is a key source of the WoF movement's understanding of atonement,⁷⁰ my starting point is to ask whether or not there is theological continuity between Swift's understanding and other contemporary sources such as Bosworth. If there is, that would suggest that Hagin and therefore WoF understanding of prosperity is theologically consistent with the wider source base, which would raise questions as to whether those sources operated within a similar theological system to Hagin. If not, that would suggest that the Hagin-Swift reading of prosperity offers something theologically novel, further reinforcing the importance to WoF and its collection of interconnected theological features.

The WoF source base brought with it the language of provision and specifically the suggestion that healing is 'provided for in the atonement'.⁷¹ Chapter 4 concluded that WoF's substitutionary atonement-based belief in divine healing combined with the movement's tendency to apply such principles across the different dimensions of the trichotomy provides

⁷⁰ Along with T. J. McCrossan and P. C. Nelson (see 4.1.1).

⁷¹ See 4.1.3.

the opportunity for the application of redemption manifested in other areas including the realm of finances. That being the case, prosperity should be understood as a product of the immaterial phase, that is the trichotomy-faith-positive-confession combination.

Of the three main sources of WoF's atonement healing theology (P. C. Nelson, T. J. McCrossan and Bosworth), Bosworth is the only to explicitly examine questions of prosperity in any detail. Therefore, Bosworth's writings offer a possible example of the connection between the theology of atonement healing and redemption-based prosperity we find in Swift and then Hagin. Bosworth's writings, which overwhelmingly focus on bodily healing as opposed to wealth, also potentially exemplify a systematic understanding of health and wealth, specifically that of atonement healing leading onto prosperity.

Bosworth's overt connection to prosperity teaching has sometimes been overlooked or minimised, with some sources suggesting '...Bosworth never preached prosperity'.⁷²

However, Bosworth wrote explicitly in support of prosperity. Bosworth's most overtly prosperity-related publication is *The Key to the Windows of Heaven or God's Financial Plan, with Supplement, Should Sinners Tithe?* which was published during the same decade as his central healing work *Christ the Healer*.⁷³ Were further evidence of Bosworth's generally pro-prosperity views necessary, *The Key to the Windows of Heaven...* was originally published as an article entitled 'God's Financial Plan Insures the Prosperity of His People'.⁷⁴

Theologically, that title is just as emphatic about God's will to prosper as Bosworth was in his belief that it is God's will to heal the body. The internal pages continue in a similar vein: 'Since God promises blessing, both spiritual and temporal, through "tithing" and giving,

⁷² Bowler, *Blessed*.

⁷³ F. F. Bosworth, *The Key to the Windows of Heaven or God's Financial Plan, with Supplement, Should Sinners Tithe?* (Miami, Florida: Bosworth, n.d.).

⁷⁴ Richmann, "Living in Bible Times: F.F. Bosworth and the Pentecostal Pursuit of the Supernatural," 362.

why should not we all take the steps of faith and claim *these* blessings, just as we do for salvation, healing and all the other blessings which God promises?’ Thus, *The Key to the Windows of Heaven* develops Bosworth’s belief that divine healing was provided in the atonement in parallel with the forgiveness of sin to include other ‘temporal’ blessings such as finances. In other words, Bosworth primarily believed the atonement brought with it redemption from sin and over time expanded his view to include divine healing and then financial prosperity. With Bosworth preaching that kind of prosperity, can a theological link between atonement healing and prosperity be established?

In addition to *The Key to the Windows of Heaven*, one of Bosworth’s sharpest contemporary critics also identified the theological parallel between atonement healing and financial provision: ‘It is a wonder that Mr. Bosworth hasn’t found in this figure that atonement was made for our mortgages.’⁷⁵ Indeed, Bingham’s reference to Bosworth’s atonement healing belief as ‘this figure’ suggests that Bingham saw Bosworth’s understanding of atonement as applicable to different dimensions of life. Crucially, Bosworth himself links the manifestation of a scriptural promise – in this case financial provision – via ‘steps of faith’ and the kind of acquisitional faith identified in Chapter 2.⁷⁶ Such steps of faith – namely claiming believed promises – are broadly comparable with the immaterial phase identified in the first three chapters of this thesis, however Bosworth does not explicitly connect positive confession or trichotomy to financial matters in *The Key to the Windows of Heaven*... And Bosworth’s text makes only passing reference to healing as a parallel example of promises obtained by faith.

Bosworth traces his understanding of prosperity to his own reading of a collection of

⁷⁵ Bingham, *The Bible and the Body* 51–52 quoted in Richman, “Living in Bible Times”, 239.

⁷⁶ See 2.1.2.

mainly tithing-related Scriptures such as Leviticus 27:30 and Numbers 18:21.⁷⁷ And therefore, perhaps surprisingly in light of his exhortation to claim financial promises in the same way as divine healing, Bosworth's prosperity centres on tithing as opposed to a development of his very clear views on atonement healing. On that point, Bosworth's enthusiastic support of tithing as the promise and means of accessing prosperity is very much in line with Lincott's 'divine money claim' which Hagin cites in *The Midas Touch*.⁷⁸ Bosworth's subsequent teaching on financial sowing and reaping builds on the same acquisitive faith foundation and is distinct from Swift and Hagin's redemption-prosperity.⁷⁹ The language of sowing and reaping, which, in the context of prosperity teaching, is understood to mean giving and receiving material provision, becomes a distinctly prosperity-related faith-act along the lines of sensory denial in relation to divine healing. The outcome is that believers can give money in faith that they will receive more money, irrespective of the state of their finances.

Bosworth's theology of prosperity is therefore broadly similar to what would become the WoF prosperity, but upon closer inspection it is constructed on a different scriptural foundation and does not engage with the Swift-Hagin idea of redemption from poverty. Bosworth's atonement-provided healing represents an obvious parallel with what transpired in WoF, but there does not appear to be a clear historical connection between Bosworth's theologies of divine healing and Swift's foundational prosperity-as-redemption-from-poverty teaching. That observation lends support to Hagin/Swift's suggestion that 'nobody else was preaching that God had redeemed us from the curse of poverty' between the 1920s and the

⁷⁷ Bosworth, *The Key to the Windows of Heaven or God's Financial Plan, with Supplement, Should Sinners Tithe?*, 5-6. Bosworth further supports his reading with quotes from Patristic sources including Irenaeus, Didache and Tertulian.

⁷⁸ Lincott, *The Path to Wealth*, 121.

⁷⁹ Richmann, "Living in Bible Times: F.F. Bosworth and the Pentecostal Pursuit of the Supernatural," 362.

1950s.⁸⁰ And that in turn suggests that Swift and Hagin, played key roles in originating and propagating their particular brand of prosperity teaching. While it has not been possible to establish a historical link between Bosworth's prosperity teaching and the Swift/Hagin approach, theologically there are more similarities and common dependencies. Specifically, the belief in redemption from poverty requires an atonement-provision understanding such as Bosworth's in order for redemption from poverty to be a manifest experience. Just as atonement healing teaches that believers are redeemed from the curse of sickness in order to be blessed with divine health, Swift and Hagin's reading of Galatians 3:13-14 is that 'God had redeemed us from the curse of poverty' so 'the blessing of Abraham might come...' and specifically Hagin reports that God told Swift 'The first thing I promised Abraham was that I would make him rich.'⁸¹ As well as promoting prosperity as redemption from the curse of poverty, Swift's testimony that prosperity was the first thing God promised Abraham establishes a view that material riches are of primary importance in God's covenant. As a result, prosperity's prominence within WoF is raised significantly.

According to his own letters, Swift felt led by God to walk away from his missionary organisation (the PMU) in order 'to look to the Lord alone for the personal support of Mrs Swift and myself'.⁸² And, as we saw earlier,⁸³ Swift believed that he should rely on God for material support before he left for China. Therefore, Swift's redemption-from-poverty understanding of prosperity is also a clear example of what Yong terms the missionary justification for prosperity – the belief that God provides material support for those that share

⁸⁰ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 10.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸² Allan A. Swift, "Letter to Thomas Mundell", 20 July 1920, PMU Archives. While Swift's 20 July 1920 letter is clear, just a fortnight earlier on 7 July 1920 Swift wrote to request that PMU pay his son's primary school tuition fees. And elsewhere in his PMU correspondence, Swift wrote that "we missionaries" "pray in" all the money that is needed and "what we have not asked for". Allan A. Swift, "Letter to Thomas Mundell", 7 July 1920, PMU Archives.

⁸³ Swift, "Pentecostal Missions Union Missionary Application Form."

the gospel.⁸⁴

From his PMU application onwards, Swift was similarly resolute that divine healing was provided for in the atonement.⁸⁵ Defining 'divine healing' within that form, Swift writes: 'The healing of our bodies was provided for us as much as delivered from sin. Matt. 8:17; Isa 53:4-5.'⁸⁶ In her part of the PMU application, Carrie Swift explained her healing beliefs like this: 'God has promised us healing in the atonement. Isaiah 53:4-5'. Clearly both believed in atonement healing and Allan Swift appears to follow the language of contemporary early Pentecostal, P. C. Nelson, in viewing divine healing as *provided for*. Indeed, Swift's provided-for-us-as-much-as comparison precedes his subsequent revelation of prosperity chronologically. Given Swift's reliance on the redemption language of Galatians 3:13-14 as his scriptural justification for prosperity, belief in atonement healing also precedes Swift's understanding of prosperity theologically. In other words, adherence to atonement healing and specifically the belief that healing is provided for in the atonement is foundational to the belief that believers are redeemed from poverty and heirs to prosperity.

Those beliefs entered the WoF movement via Hagin subsequent to Hagin's earlier beliefs in acquisitional faith, divine faith, positive confession and divine healing. And therefore, in WoF, Bosworth's implicit connection between a belief in divine healing provided in the atonement and the belief that prosperity is also provided in the atonement becomes explicit. Put another way, WoF's atonement teaching and the testimony of certain early Pentecostals provided the necessary bridge between atonement healing and financial redemption found in WoF. And therefore, WoF prosperity holds that believers are redeemed from poverty and heirs to the blessing of Abraham received in the new creation via Christ,

⁸⁴ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 10-12. Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 21. See 5.2.4 for further engagement with the "missionary argument".

⁸⁵ Swift, "Pentecostal Missions Union Missionary Application Form." "Healing through the Word," *Pentecostal Evangel* (1943).

⁸⁶ "Pentecostal Missions Union Missionary Application Form."

their reading of which brings with it the empowerment to become materially wealthy.⁸⁷

However, since WoF prosperity – like healing – is predicated on the movement's trichotomous anthropology those beliefs are seen as complete spiritually but not necessarily physically manifest.

5.2 Prosperity, Atonement Provision and the Theological Function of Prosperity

Having traced the theological roots of Hagin's specific redemption-from-poverty understanding of prosperity during the first section of this chapter, I now focus on prosperity's theological function. In the WoF context, healing is provided-for in the atonement.⁸⁸ Atonement is seen as multi-dimensional corresponding to WoF notions of spirit, soul and body.⁸⁹ Developing the notion that physical healing is 'provided for' in the atonement, I specifically examine how WoF teaches that believers are 'abundantly provided for' in other physical and material ways – focusing on financial provision and the belief that adherents are 'redeemed from poverty'.⁹⁰ Placed alongside the movement's established atonement healing beliefs, such views illustrate the underlying belief that the atonement wrought through Christ's death, burial and resurrection results in multiple planes of redemption pertaining to the different dimensions of the trichotomy and even different aspects of human life. All of that is predicated on the atonement-provision paradigm analysed in the preceding healing chapter.⁹¹ To put it another way, this section analyses the relationship between WoF atonement theology and prosperity theology, examining how the two concepts interact.

⁸⁷ Vincent, for example, points out that atonement, redemption from poverty and inheriting the blessing of Abraham are key features of the WoF understanding of prosperity. Vincent, "The Formation of a Prosperity Theology," 14, 35.

⁸⁸ See Chapter 4.

⁸⁹ See 4.2 and 4.2.2.2.

⁹⁰ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*.

⁹¹ See Chapter 4.

Moreover, since atonement healing was found to be a material product of the immaterial foundations of trichotomy and faith, and since prosperity is similarly positioned as a product of those preceding features as well, the question of whether or not healing and prosperity are sequential is also examined. In short, the second part of this chapter argues that WoF prosperity represents a material product of the immaterial features of WoF belief, namely faith and positive confession set within the context of WoF's trichotomous anthropology. The second part of the chapter further argues that WoF prosperity is subsequent to and reliant upon the atonement provision paradigms established in the movement's atonement healing theology.

5.2.1 Manifesting Prosperity – Prosperity in Relation to Trichotomy, Faith, Positive Confession and Healing

Since WoF prosperity is based is redemption based (see 5.1.1 and 5.1.2), such prosperity is reliant on WoF understanding of atonement which was established in relation to divine healing. However, while WoF's provision paradigms are rooted in the movement's atonement healing understanding, the mechanism of manifestation draws from the framework found in the trichotomy, faith and positive confession combination. Just as in the case of divine healing, the theological grounds for prosperity are established in the provision of the atonement, but those grounds are viewed through the interpretative lens of trichotomy, and the application of WoF notions of faith via positive confession.

The apparent steps to walking in the manifestation of prosperity began with an 'adjustment down on the inside' in the human 'spirit'.⁹² Such references to the human spirit reflect the importance of trichotomous anthropology to the system. Seen through that interpretative lens, prosperity is released in the spiritual dimension of believers as part of the

⁹² Hagin, *How God Taught Me About Prosperity*, 6.

ontological transition from sinner to saint at salvation.⁹³ And with that shift complete, the same rationale is paired with an ontological argument that since God is omnipotent, he is able to answer prayer; and since his able, he is also willing.⁹⁴

Spiritual realities are then to be accessed by faith via acquisitional- and divine-faith,⁹⁵ which act as the immaterial conduit for transporting spiritual realities towards manifestation. From here, positive confession and its corollary sensory denial become central features of the WoF praxis, acting as the immaterial-to-material bridge, positioned to shift spiritually completed truths (in this case the redemption from poverty and the blessing of prosperity) from the immaterial through the human spirit, via the soul and mind to the body and thus into the realm of physical manifestation.

Thus, the next step in the journey towards manifestation is to prioritise the as-yet unmaterialised spiritual reality irrespective of the temporal reality. For example, Hagin further testifies that Jesus personally taught him to engage in sensory denial in the context of prosperity along the same lines as divine healing: ‘Sometimes even while you were preaching any symptoms you had would disappear. Now, you see, you have to do the same thing when it comes to finances.’⁹⁶ And therefore, like healing before it, redemption from poverty paired with the blessing of prosperity are viewed as complete spiritually but not necessarily manifest materially. Such manifestation is achieved via faith and positive confession. At the same time, prosperity itself is both historically and theologically subsequent to divine healing. Both points suggest that prosperity is the result of combining trichotomous anthropology, especially the belief in the elevation of the redeemed human spirit to the level of divine faith, with positive confession alongside the atonement-provision paradigm derived from WoF

⁹³ Bowler, "Blessed," 35-36.

⁹⁴ David T. Williams, "Anselm and Hagin: Ontological Argument and Prosperity Cult," *Koers* 72, no. 2 (1992): 229.

⁹⁵ See chapter 2 for more on both paradigms.

⁹⁶ Hagin, *How God Taught Me About Prosperity*, 7.

divine healing.

5.2.2 Prosperity as a Product Versus an Overarching Narrative

Such is the notoriety attached to prosperity teaching, when it is not referred to as ‘health and wealth’ or ‘name it and claim it’ doctrine, WoF is often called the prosperity *gospel*.⁹⁷ Such references infer that prosperity is critical to the WoF movement’s doctrine and indeed its view of Christianity. In other words, labelling prosperity teaching as prosperity gospel suggest that prosperity is WoF’s over-arching narrative. But with trichotomy, faith, positive confession and divine healing playing interconnected roles in the combination that has led us to prosperity, is prosperity an over-arching narrative, as monikers such as prosperity gospel suggest, or is prosperity a *product* of the WoF features that have gone before it chronologically and systematically? If prosperity is indeed a product and not an over-arching narrative, that conclusion would impact both the way we read WoF and the language we use in relation to the movement. If prosperity is only a feature in a network, WoF should be seen as a broader system of interconnected features and terms such as *WoF* should be preferred over *prosperity gospel*. However, if prosperity is the narrative driving-force of the movement’s theology, language such as prosperity gospel is more appropriate.

Similarly, concluding that prosperity represents WoF’s over-arching narrative has significant theological implications. Since trichotomy is WoF’s primary interpretative lens,⁹⁸ were prosperity found to be the movement’s over-arching narrative, the other features should be read through the prosperity lens. Identifying the impact of the adoption of prosperity as an interpretative lens should, therefore, also receive analytical attention. Therefore, as in the previous chapters, this theological analysis builds on the findings of the preceding

⁹⁷ Bowler, "Blessed." "Daily Grind: The Spiritual Workday of the American Prosperity Gospel." Brogdon, *The New Pentecostal Message?*

⁹⁸ See Chapter 1.

contextualisation, before further utilising the movement's source base as a means of analytical interrogation. In order to address the question of whether prosperity is a product or an over-arching narrative, this sub-section dialogues with Mikael Stenhammar's suggestion that WoF theology overlaps with a competing prosperity narrative and also compares WoF prosperity's product-versus-narrative function with its parent feature, divine healing.⁹⁹

Hagin reports that he received his understanding of prosperity in the period between January 1950 and 1951 after leaving his pastorate to become an itinerant minister in 1949.¹⁰⁰ He then spent the next few years in a bid to 'prove it out', an important praxis-related detail we will return to, before he taught the doctrine.¹⁰¹ Hagin's first recorded public airing of his apparent prosperity revelation took place in 1954 at Swift's church.¹⁰² These points in the theological history are significant for their impact on the emergence of WoF theology for two reasons. First, because they illustrate that Hagin's adoption of prosperity came a decade or two after his adherence to faith and divine healing (including sensory denial and positive confession) in the late 1930s.¹⁰³ And second, because WoF divine healing is presented as the model Hagin should replicate in the context of prosperity rather than the other way around. Indeed, according to Hagin, that was a divine mandate personally communicated by Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁴ Both points suggest that prosperity is a theological product of the preceding WoF features in general and divine healing in particular and does not precede them as a primary narrative.

Trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity operate relatively

⁹⁹ Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement*.

¹⁰⁰ Hagin, *How God Taught Me About Prosperity*, 5, 9.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 12. Cf. 5.2.3.

¹⁰² Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 9. See 5.1.

¹⁰³ The dates coincide with the period in which Hagin discovered Kenyon in the late 1940s to early 1950s period. However, Hagin could have received his revelation of prosperity prior to discovering Kenyon. Either way, since Swift's influential revelation of prosperity occurred at least three decades earlier in the 1910s, we know that Swift's teaching preceded Kenyon by some way. Cf. Montgomery, *The Genuine Flow*, 39.

¹⁰⁴ Hagin, *How God Taught Me About Prosperity*, 7.

linearly up to this point. They begin with the immaterial features – trichotomy, faith and positive confession – and result in the products of healing and prosperity. Starting with prosperity and moving in the opposite direction, however, does not follow so straightforwardly because – according to WoF teaching – prosperity and healing are both achieved spiritually and received via the human spirit and through the movement’s notions of faith and the conduit of positive confession.

Prosperity depends on atonement healing for redemption from the curse of poverty and for provision of the blessing of prosperity. Prosperity depends on positive confession for access to the immaterially attained promise of prosperity and for a bridge between the spiritual realm, the human spirit, the soul and body in its physical and temporal realm via verbal confession – something that engages all three dimensions of the presupposed trichotomous anthropology. Likewise, the acquisition by faith of scriptural promises of prosperity – however spiritually complete they might be and however well aligned the trichotomy might be – are ineffectual without the rebirth of the human spirit at the point of salvation. Consequently, the WoF *via salutis* inherently presupposes trichotomous anthropology at the point of salvation, when physical healing is required, or when the manifestation of financial provision is needed and indeed when believers seek to attain manifestation of any scriptural promise. In other words, prosperity is reliant on the preceding features and cannot function as an overarching narrative. Rather, reading the other features through prosperity without the already-established framework results in a more isolated reading tending towards an overemphasis of prosperity.

Apart from his suggestion that ‘WoF is not at its core a system of theological beliefs and practices or a social entity but a distinct worldview’, my analysis that prosperity is a product of the preceding features rather than the reverse is largely consonant with Mikael Stenhammar’s research. Stenhammar frames WoF within an ‘Eden Redeemed’ narrative that

suggests that WoF believers are essential aiming to restore their temporal life experience to a prelapsarian state via faith attainment of the scriptural promises of God. Specifically, the ‘Eden redeemed’ narrative suggests the ultimate goal of God’s redemptive work is ‘to restore humankind to their first state of blessed vocation of dominion over the world and its resources.’¹⁰⁵ In relation to WoF teaching this means the undoing of the effects of the fall, beginning with ‘the rebirth of the human spirit’ with consequential positive impact on the psychological and physical dimensions of humanity.¹⁰⁶ Hagin’s thesis that believers are redeemed from sickness, poverty and spiritual death necessarily broadens the scope of what God is restoring away from just material resources and in the direction of the immaterial and eternal state of the believer. The addition of the missional context in which the same redemption thesis was birthed adds another dimension, which further broadens the scope of redemptive work away from individual self-actualisation and into eschatological reconciliation between God and humanity.

However, as Stenhammar’s Eden Redeemed narrative suggests, the result of such reconciliation between individual believers and the divine is only understood to result in the restoration of the Edenic state of humanity. But my research shows that, according to WoF principles, reconciliation goes much further and means believers can attain *New Creation Realities*.¹⁰⁷ While the term ‘new creation realities’ may have been coined by Kenyon, A. B. Simpson demonstrates the impact of what has been termed pneumocentrism within the pre-WoF trichotomous anthropology underlying WoF when he writes:¹⁰⁸ ‘We do not teach...that the purpose of Christ's redemption is to restore us to Adamic perfection, for if we had it we should lose it tomorrow; but rather to unite us with the Second Adam, and lift us up to a

¹⁰⁵ Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement*, 102.

¹⁰⁶ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 30.

¹⁰⁷ Kenyon, *New Creation Realities*.

¹⁰⁸ See Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal.", 27.

higher plane than our first parents ever knew.’¹⁰⁹ In other words, the exaltation-of-the-redeemed-human-spirit doctrine that is part of the trichotomous anthropology adopted by WoF raises humanity to divine levels of faith.¹¹⁰ From that elevated, new creation position, via the application of sensory denial and/or positive confession faith-acts, manifestation of temporal health and wealth is the expected outcome. But WoF’s own source of prosperity-specific doctrine, namely Swift, is also explicit that both health and wealth are provided to support mission and the ministry of reconciliation rather than to function solely as ends in themselves.

On the subject of prosperity, Stenhammar argues that when WoF adherents focus on prosperity, it results in a ‘competing prosperity narrative’ with an ‘egocentric agenda’ that runs against the ‘Eden redeemed’ narrative.¹¹¹ According to Stenhammar, WoF ‘egocentrism....may arise out of WoF’s exalted anthropology’, a point worthy of further attention in the following sub-section.¹¹² In the meantime, Stenhammar’s suggestion that a competing narrative for prosperity issues from emphasis on the exalted anthropology within the WoF context is consonant with my analysis that trichotomy is a foundational entry point and an interpretative lens.

The application of prosperity teaching contexts other than those in which it originated is more problematic. Swift’s missionally-driven prosperity and his particular definition of what it means to be rich took on new meaning once Swift returned to North America and when, in subsequent generations, it was redeployed outside that original missionary context. In other words, if prosperity becomes the entry point or an interpretative lens for the other WoF features, replacing the trichotomy-faith-confession-atonement-healing combination

¹⁰⁹ A. A. Simpson, *Days of Heaven Upon Earth* (Brooklyn, New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Company, 1897), 140.

¹¹⁰ See 1.2.2.2.

¹¹¹ Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement*, 240.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 272.

borne out of the Healing movement and early Pentecostal roots, the importance of achieving prosperity is overemphasised. For example, the redemption emphasis brought through WoF healing necessarily assumes the admission of some kind of sickness, poverty or spiritual death without Christ's atoning work. Trichotomy, faith, positive confession and prosperity without the redemption emphasis tends towards ever-increasing prosperity with recognition of such brokenness. Indeed, the particularly prosperity-centric variation of WoF theology of David Oyedepo's Winner's Chapel appears to result from the combination of emphasising prosperity above the other interconnected WoF features and the re-export of Hagin's North American interpretation of Swift's prosperity teaching in discontinuity from its missionary roots.¹¹³

However, since tithing and systematic beneficence preceded WoF redemption-from-poverty prosperity teaching historically, and since WoF redemption-from-poverty prosperity teaching is reliant on trichotomy, faith, positive confession and especially atonement healing, prosperity cannot be seen as a narrative over-arching the features it relies upon. For Stenhammar, over-emphasis of prosperity results in what he refers to as a competing prosperity narrative. My analysis, on the other hand, concludes that characterising any of the products so far identified (namely healing and prosperity) as the overarching narrative represents dysfunction. In other words, the system does not work in the same way. That conclusion also means that products must proceed at least generally from the grounding of the immaterial rationale (faith and positive confession understood via trichotomy) in the direction of its products (healing and prosperity) and not the other way around. Rather, what links the product features (healing and prosperity) in thematic terms is that they represent redemption narratives.

¹¹³ Paul Gifford, "The Prosperity Theology of David Oyedepo, Founder of Winners' Chapel," in *Pastures of Plenty: Tracing Religio-Scapes of Prosperity Gospel in Africa and Beyond*, ed. Andreas Heuser (Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2015), 85-86.

In light of the contextual roots uncovered in the contextualisation and analysed in theological terms here, prosperity is a product rather than a pre-supposition or an overarching narrative. Prosperity is most fruitfully compared with what might be called its parent feature, healing. I described healing's function as a modified version of the Pentecostal 'dinner bell of salvation', a metaphor that illustrates the multiple roles played by that particular product.¹¹⁴ Similarly, prosperity is not only an outward product, but a sign drawing attention to the wider collection of features and the invisible beliefs they are based upon. In the same manner as with divine healing, positive confession is simultaneously a testimony of the unmaterialised and a testimony to what subsequently manifests. Positive confession thus propagates belief in prosperity and indirectly the preceding features (trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing) as well as providing the theological and practical support for the propagation of any subsequent features.

Perhaps the most significant difference between the dinner bells of healing and prosperity is that, once outworked, prosperity also literally funds the temporal propagation of the message, thus amplifying the teaching and practically expanding the reach of prosperity as a feature and the system as a whole. Indeed, such is the amplifying nature of the material manifestation of prosperity, it may be better described as the megaphone of redemption.

Furthermore, the act of financial giving – especially when that takes place irrespective of financial circumstances – becomes an additional category of faith-action, sensory denial behaviour characterised as the sowing of financial seeds.¹¹⁵ To summarise, it is better to refer to prosperity as financial healing rather than to refer to healing as physical prosperity because prosperity issues from and is reliant upon atonement healing and its antecedent features rather than the other way around. To do otherwise runs the risk of turning healing from its role as a

¹¹⁴ See 4.2.1.

¹¹⁵ Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement*, 210-18.

dinner bell of the gospel into a megaphone for prosperity itself.

5.2.3 *De-individualising and De-prioritising Prosperity*

The removal of prosperity doctrine from its Chinese missionary context combined with relocation into a well-to-do North American setting markedly affects its meaning. Terms like *provision* and *prosperity* can be understood quite differently by a missionary looking to provide food for themselves, their family and those they are serving compared with affluent households taking care of their own interests or supporting an established church organisation in that context. Such a contextual transplantation of prosperity teaching, combined with the tendency towards individualism that flows from WoF trichotomy results in an overemphasis on meeting the personal goals of adherents. Those imbalances must be addressed in order to help avoid the well-documented excesses associated with prosperity teaching. This section engages with Kenneth E. Hagin's testimony of how he received and developed his prosperity theology as well as secondary criticism as a means of reframing WoF prosperity in line with its source context and in light of trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing.

Hagin clearly believed WoF prosperity teaching was divinely sanctioned, but towards the end of his life Hagin was also concerned about the 'alarming increase of confusion, error, and extremism regarding the prosperity message.'¹¹⁶ In *Midas Touch*, Hagin responds by interspersing accounts of his reception of the prosperity message with insights from pre-Pentecostal and Pentecostal sources. Hagin does not explicitly state that the excesses of prosperity teaching he seeks to address stem from prosperity teaching being wrenched from its historical context or from the isolation of prosperity from other WoF features, but Hagin's decision to point back to his revelation of prosperity and the historically earliest prosperity

¹¹⁶ Hagin, *Midas Touch*, xi.

sources he knows does suggest that. Engaging with Hagin's writing on prosperity not only offers insights into the reception history of WoF prosperity and its theological function, but also provides the basis for demonstrating how the excesses of prosperity teaching differs from its sources.

Hagin states that he decided to 'prove...out' the prosperity doctrine personally before he shared it publicly with other Christians.¹¹⁷ That episode – especially when compared with Hagin's latest writings on the subject – provides a penetrating insight into the operation of prosperity praxis.

First, Hagin testifies that he received revelation of prosperity directly from Jesus. The veracity of this teaching was subsequently confirmed by Swift, according to Hagin.¹¹⁸ In other words, Hagin personally exercised the kind of meditative function I identified as a key part of positive confession (see 3.2.2) before he moved onto explicit acts of positive confession and acquisitive faith (see 2.1.1). Next, in highlighting his decision to 'prove it out', Hagin unconsciously outlines a model for introducing praxis within the WoF movement that would follow. Specifically, Hagin models his understanding of how believers can move from faith to positive confession and the intended manifestation. In other words, by explaining how he received the doctrine of WoF prosperity, Hagin unconsciously models how believers should establish their faith privately between themselves and the divine, receive support from the community of believers and only then exercise external faith praxis. Stated differently, the emerging WoF system functions in the spiritual life of an individual believer first, before it is expressed outwardly. At this point, prosperity – like WoF healing – acts as a dinner bell drawing others to that teaching and indeed the wider collection of features. That process closely follows the meditative function of positive confession (see

¹¹⁷ *How God Taught Me About Prosperity*, 12.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

3.2.2).

One of the downsides of Hagin's example of the private establishment of a faith-position, is that it further reinforces the egocentrism of prosperity identified by Stenhammar. That egocentrism combined with the dysfunction associated with overemphasising prosperity in comparison with the other WoF features results in the kind of prosperity teaching and resultant practice that has rightly received criticism.¹¹⁹ In addition, the private establishment of a faith-position makes correction of error more difficult because the established belief is both seen as revelation from God via the human spirit and has become internally reinforced in the life of the believer. In the case of leaders within hierarchical church structures, the problems are multiplied because accepting the teaching of the church leader is also promoted as a way of attaining faith for a particular end. Refusal to receive the revelation of a church leader could, in that case, be characterised as unbelief working against faith, faith being a key feature of WoF.

However, the contextualisation showed that WoF prosperity – especially as taught by its main source, Swift – exhibits a particular redemption-from-poverty narrative rooted in a missional context.¹²⁰ From there, WoF prosperity was exported from its straightened and inherently outward-focused beginnings to more materially comfortable and arguably more individualistic North American surroundings when Swift returned from China. That contextual shift meant the theology was interpreted in light of quite different practical circumstances and a different theological environment.¹²¹ Indeed, Swift's return to North America brought his prosperity teaching into a context where trichotomy, faith and positive confession were already evident in the Healing movements and early Pentecostal sources.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Fee, *The Disease of the Health & Wealth Gospels*. Farah, *Pinnacle of the Temple*.

¹²⁰ See 5.1.1. Hagin, *How God Taught Me About Prosperity*, 3-5. *Midas Touch*, 63-64.

¹²¹ Bowler, "Blessed."

¹²² See Chapters 1-4.

However, the question of where WoF prosperity theology should be situated on the spectrum of prosperity theologies identified in secondary research on the matter remains.¹²³

In light of Swift's role as the key source of Hagin's distinctive redemption-from-poverty theology of prosperity,¹²⁴ WoF prosperity is comparable with the missional rationale for prosperity identified by Pentecostal theologian Amos Yong since Swift was himself a missionary to China and explicitly situated his revelation of prosperity within his missionary experience.¹²⁵ However, for much of Swift's life and for all of Hagin's, these ministers were based in North America and so cannot be described as international missionaries during those periods. Consequently, we should either extend our definition of missional to include general teaching, preaching and publishing ministry as well as international evangelisation or suggest such activities are not equivalent with Swift's original Chinese missional context. The latter has generally been the case in practice within WoF, but Hagin argues that 'in God's economy, prosperity is the means to an end—world evangelism' and that helping others to missionally *go* is a legitimate context in which to believe for prosperity.¹²⁶ In other words, WoF teachers offer contextual arguments in support of the validity of prosperity teaching.¹²⁷

Amos Yong's work identifying different prosperity theologies and their supporting arguments also identifies a contextual rationale as one example. Yong articulates how the contextual argument suggests money is not seen theologically as evil per se, but that rather the love of money is the central problem.¹²⁸ Hagin offers that precise rationale as the basis for his justification of the morality of WoF prosperity and so Hagin's argument is compatible

¹²³ Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*. Cf. Heuser, "Prosperity Theology: Material Abundance and Praxis of Transformation."

¹²⁴ See Hagin, *Biblical Keys to Financial Prosperity*, 29. *Redeemed from Poverty*, 9-12. *Midas Touch*, 40.

¹²⁵ Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 20.

¹²⁶ Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 64.

¹²⁷ Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 23.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

with Yong's definition of the contextual argument in favour of prosperity.¹²⁹ Yong further explains that the contextual argument suggests that believers in the global south both attribute their experiences of financial provision to God and should have as much opportunity to access the levels of provision experienced in the West. They particularly should not have to reject on ethical grounds what Western believers experience daily.¹³⁰ However, once again, many sources of WoF prosperity are based in affluent countries and specifically North America and so any arguments of that kind must be modified to take the relevant geographical and socioeconomic realities into account. Indeed, from its earliest source, WoF's application of the missional argument appears to extend beyond the supply of basic needs into abundant provision. For Swift, that meant the provision of a horse for him to ride in order to ease his stress as a missionary as well as expensive tuition fees for his son's education.¹³¹ For Hagin too, prosperity means being 'abundantly provided for' financially, but references are often less explicitly linked to missionary impetus.¹³² The problem with that interpretation is that abundant provision in privileged twentieth century North America looks different to Chinese mission field in the early 1900s and different again to the contemporary global south, North America and Europe. Exporting specific examples from one cultural context to another – especially when terms such as 'rich' are handled carelessly – is one reason for the prosperity teaching's tainted reputation and its excesses.¹³³

But the failures of the movement do not necessitate the rejection of a concept that offers the hope of empowerment and transformation.¹³⁴ As Wonsuk Ma notes, 'the simple understanding of the PG [the prosperity gospel] as the combination of Pentecostal

¹²⁹ Hagin, *Biblical Keys to Financial Prosperity*, 30.

¹³⁰ Attanasi and Yong, *Pentecostalism and Prosperity*, 24.

¹³¹ Swift.

¹³² Hagin, *Biblical Keys to Financial Prosperity*, 30.

¹³³ Sadly there are many examples, but Senator Grassley's high profile investigation highlights some: Lohr, "Senator Probes Megachurches' Finances." Cf. Brice-Saddler, "A Wealthy Televangelist Explains His Fleet of Private Jets: 'It's a Biblical Hing'."

¹³⁴ Heuser, "Prosperity Theology: Material Abundance and Praxis of Transformation," 420.

Christianity and western consumerist capitalism no longer holds to diverse socio-economic contexts...'.¹³⁵ Rather, nuanced understanding is required. Ultimately, Ma hopes what he terms the prosperity gospel can itself be redeemed into a 'theology of blessing'.¹³⁶ Ma thereby repositions 'prosperity' from its place as an end of Christian aspiration to a means to fulfilling God-given mandate, or mission and moves towards a more collective understanding – from 'what I want' to 'what we all need'. Since the theological roots of WoF's prosperity theology straddle both Yong's missional and contextual definitions, they have the potential to represent something like Ma's best-case example of a theology of blessing. Thus, WoF prosperity can and should also be corrected and reconstructed along the lines of the theology of blessing to which Ma refers. And therefore, once again, WoF's own reception history provides a necessary corrective to address its contemporary weaknesses.

Wonsuk Ma's discussion of Yonggi Cho's 'theology of blessing' represents an understandable attempt to separate the transformational strengths of prosperity praxis from its excesses.¹³⁷ Ma, too, sees egocentrism and individualism as the key underlying weaknesses of prosperity.¹³⁸ Another option is to restate and reinforce what is meant by prosperity.¹³⁹ Referring to Old Testament understandings of transformation and prosperity, and in contrast with those that seek to question the veracity of faith in divine blessing on temporal finances, Douglas Harrison-Mills argues that economic growth and flourishing can indeed indicate blessing: '[the Hebrew]...economic model was based primarily on growth and not redistribution', adding: 'Sadly...the modern prosperity gospel...practice is an aberrant

¹³⁵ Ma, "Blessing in Pentecostal Theology," 272.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 290. Cf. (*Introduction: 2000 onwards...*)

¹³⁷ Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension* (Plainfield, New Jersey: Logos International, 1979), 22, 83. *Salvation, Health & Prosperity: Our Threefold Blessings in Christ* (Altamonte Springs, Florida: Creation House, 1987), 16. Ma, "Blessing in Pentecostal Theology," 274. Heuser, "Prosperity Theology: Material Abundance and Praxis of Transformation," 417.

¹³⁸ Ma, "Blessing in Pentecostal Theology," 291.

¹³⁹ Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement*, 169.

mutation of the ancient salvation-restoration model...'¹⁴⁰

In line with Yong and Ma's analyses, prosperity doctrine becomes unstable and problematic when the demands of non-missional contexts influence what are determined to be material needs; and when prosperity is separated from missional purposes of God. Furthermore, Harrison-Mills also argues in favour of the de-individualisation of prosperity teaching: 'the modern prosperity gospel runs into trouble on both theological and practical grounds because...the message is usually preached or promoted in a way that is designed to appeal to individuals'.¹⁴¹ Instead, Harrison-Mills suggests 'the appropriate macroeconomic environment for both a proper understanding and application of the OT salvation restoration oracles and blessing model is one that occurs within a "tribal" or at least community-wide context'.¹⁴² In other words, problems arise when prosperity is exclusively interpreted individualistically. But, on the other hand, that conclusion offers hope that the same problems can be addressed via re-reading with a corporate interpretation.

The particularly rigid trichotomous anthropology evident in WoF offers one explanation for the individualistic tendencies associated with the WoF movement, which are reflected in certain aspects of prosperity praxis.¹⁴³ From the trichotomous entry point onwards, the interconnected features reinforce individual salvation, the re-birth of an individual spirit, the re-aligning of an individual's spirit, soul and body and the personal disciplines of positive confession in order to claim God's promises for oneself – all with a view to personally manifesting promises of blessings such as healing and prosperity. Notwithstanding the caveats that WoF adherents enter into a 'gift economy' that can be

¹⁴⁰ Douglas John Harrison-Mills, "Hearing About Jesus, but Thinking About Joel: Exploring the Biblical and Historical Relationship between Spiritual and Economic Transformation" (University of Birmingham, 2011), 335.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 353.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ See Chapter 1.

altruistic and transformative,¹⁴⁴ and that prosperity theologies can engender the creative power of abundance over scarcity mindsets,¹⁴⁵ the underlying doctrines of trichotomy and positive confession evident in the WoF tend towards egocentrism.¹⁴⁶

First, WoF's hierarchical trichotomous anthropology advances a virtually divinised human spirit (see 1.2.2.2). Since spiritual realities are attained in the spiritual realm by the human spirit and manifested in the body via the soul in WoF, individual responsibility for the acquisition of divine promises is inevitable. That could be seen as a logical development of earlier evangelical notions of personal salvation. But the effect of completely individualising redemption (whether it pertains to salvation, healing or prosperity) is that it pushes towards self-consciousness and even self-centredness. However, if WoF trichotomy is modified into a more holistic and integrative anthropology, that improvement would cascade into a more corporate understanding of prosperity, without denying individual applications. Therefore, any such individualisation should be tempered with a corporate understanding or else it will tend towards egocentrism.

Second, the geographical shift of Swift's missionary-driven prosperity teaching from its original context in the straightened circumstances of early 19th century rural China into the comparatively affluent North America detached WoF prosperity teaching away from the regulation of extrinsic missional purpose. Genuine fervour to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ is necessarily outward focused and therefore goes some way to addressing the danger of egocentrism. Without that balancing feature, however, such outward-focused missional fervour has too often been reinterpreted as a rationale for appealing for funds to invest in

¹⁴⁴ Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement*, 54.

¹⁴⁵ Edward Suh, "A Kentic Theology of Empowerment and Abundance: Liberating Prosperity Theologies for Ordinary Human Flourishing" (Fuller Theological Seminary, 2018), 212. Suh's view contrasts with A. J. Swoboda who seeks to critique prosperity gospel's apparent belief in limitless resources: A. J. Swoboda, "Posterity or Prosperity? Critiquing and Refiguring Prosperity Theologies in an Ecological Age," *Pneuma* 37, no. 3 (2015): 406.

¹⁴⁶ Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostalism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury, 2012), 103.

television broadcasts and jets to broaden the reach of certain high-profile ministries. But, as Hagin himself wrote in a bid to return to the original Swift-inspired missional emphasis: ‘Do we seek prosperity to help finance the work of God? Or do we just want to enjoy the lavish luxuries of life—big houses, showy cars, expensive clothes, fancy food, and lavish entertainment?’¹⁴⁷ Lest the work of God be too narrowly interpreted as any activity of WoF propagating ministers, the re-emphasis of Swift’s original missional circumstances would be beneficial.

Put another way, two of prosperity theology’s greatest theological problems – its de-contextualisation from its missional roots and its egocentrism – can be addressed by modifying the movement’s anthropology. Redefining WoF anthropology in more integrated as opposed to trichotomous terms has the effect of making believers more outward-looking and collaborative in their faith exploits and naturally reconnects bodies of believers with the missional impetus. At the same time, were WoF to re-visit the roots of its own prosperity teaching and the strongly missional context in which it was found, the significance of the movement’s tendency towards individualisation and egocentrism would be lessened without dispatching with the positive benefits associated with prosperity’s transformational potential.

Conclusion

WoF prosperity relies on the movement’s atonement healing views and since it operates in relation to (rather than apart from or in parallel to) WoF readings of trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing, it cannot be described as an over-arching narrative. Instead, prosperity operates as a result of those trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing beliefs.

Beginning with a more integrated anthropology, all the subsequent WoF features

¹⁴⁷ Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 64-65.

benefit from being applied as corporate as well as individual principles. Specifically, re-emphasising prosperity's missional motivation provides a helpful balance to the well-documented excesses associated with prosperity. Furthermore, the combined spirit-Scripture-community emphases of the Pentecostal hermeneutic offer WoF an ongoing route towards a more internally consistent model than the self-defeating egocentrism of the prosperity counter narrative.¹⁴⁸ With modification of this kind in place, WoF prosperity has the potential to be a 'faith and hope gospel', the kind of 'gospel of blessing' the subject's most hopeful interlocutors suggest it can be.¹⁴⁹

In other words, WoF prosperity teaching is a theological product of the preceding features. It also provides grounds for further features, offering a means to the material manifestation of prosperity. But to what end? At best, transformation from poverty for individuals, communities and the funding of missional endeavour.

Since prosperity teaching is the second key product of trichotomy, faith and positive confession after divine healing, the implication is that there are likely to be more products and that the combination of features operates as a system. Indeed, the anthropological multi-dimensionality upon which the group of features is based suggests the whole human has been redeemed and therefore momentum is consistently moving towards the next theological feature, raising the questions: what else is provided for in the atonement and what are believers redeemed from?

For Hagin, redemption from poverty went hand in hand with redemption from spiritual death.¹⁵⁰ And since the atoning work of Christ's physical death on the cross forms the basis for WoF's belief in physical healing and temporal prosperity, read in light of the movement's continuing emphasis on trichotomy, its sources look for a distinct spiritual

¹⁴⁸ Vincent, "The Formation of a Prosperity Theology," 67.

¹⁴⁹ White, "Name It, Claim It, Grab It." Ma, "Blessing in Pentecostal Theology."

¹⁵⁰ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 27. *Midas Touch*, 40. *Biblical Keys to Financial Prosperity*, 1-30.

atoning work to correspond with the spiritual death of unregenerate humans. That idea is known as the Jesus Died Spiritually doctrine, which is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: JESUS DIED SPIRITUALLY

If prosperity is a controversial WoF teaching, the Jesus Died Spiritually doctrine – the belief that Jesus’s demise was more than physical – is more so. Indeed, the idea that Jesus Died Spiritually (abbreviated to JDS) is arguably the most controversial theological feature associated with WoF due to its Christological consequences. Specifically, that JDS ruptures the trinity at best and advocates for a ‘demonic view of Christ...filled with...“the satanic nature”...who must be “born again” in hell’,¹ at worst. JDS is situated last in my analysis of WoF’s six interconnected features because it represents the final phase of the three-fold narrative of redemption from sickness, poverty and spiritual death found in Hagin’s writings, which itself appears to follow trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity. Thus, having analysed WoF notions of redemption from sickness (healing) and from poverty (prosperity) in the preceding two chapters, this chapter now focuses on redemption from spiritual death.

Since WoF anthropology reflects the Christology it inherited from the movement’s source base (see 1.1), and since WoF anthropology impacts the movement’s understanding of the trinity (see 4.2.4), this final chapter critically analyses JDS in light of trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity. Specifically, this chapter evaluates how the movement’s particular readings of those features sustains JDS. In addition, it also asks how JDS functions in relation to trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity.

In order to address those theological questions, this chapter begins by contextualising JDS teaching in light of its sources, thereby articulating the main features of JDS, particularly the atonement readings JDS is built upon (see 4.2.1 for initial indications of the connections between WoF atonement and JDS). Beginning with the final part of Hagin’s threefold

¹ McConnell, *The Promise*, 186.

redemption teaching (redeemed from spiritual death),² the contextualisation asks what is meant by spiritual death, if redemption from spiritual death necessitates JDS and where the teaching originates. Building on the work of the contextualisation, the theological analysis examines JDS in light of its sources, ultimately asking if the sources of JDS can be used as the basis for addressing JDS's resultant Christological and trinitarian problems.

6.1 Contextualising Jesus Died Spiritually theology

Beginning with its trichotomous anthropological pre-suppositions, WoF teaching weaves faith and positive confession/sensory denial into a theological nest within which the movement's readings of healing and prosperity are incubated. Healing, which brings with it WoF's particular substitutionary understanding of the atonement, and its sibling prosperity are the eggs.

For its part, JDS could be seen as one of the most immaterial features associated with the WoF movement. Like the theoretical anthropology of trichotomy, and like the invisible nature of faith, JDS could be described as part of the immaterial phase of the emerging WoF system. But, since JDS is also dependent on the principles of atonement healing that precede it, is JDS also, to continue the metaphor, an egg? To put it another way, do the other five WoF features depend on JDS or does JDS result from the other features?

Since WoF healing is so reliant on trichotomy, faith and positive confession, and because prosperity issues from the same substitutionary understandings of the atonement as the movement's theology of healing, healing, prosperity and any subsequent features such as JDS are inextricably inter-connected. If, as William Atkinson also acknowledges, JDS significantly impacts 'Word-faith trinitarianism, Christology, anthropology, and atonement

² Namely that believers are redeemed from sickness, poverty and spiritual death. See Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*.

theory', such wide-reaching knock-on effects potentially suggest that all six interconnected features operate as a system.³

For WoF adherents, the central question connecting trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS is: If believers are redeemed from the curse of physical sickness and material poverty via the corporeal death of the incarnate Christ, by what means are believers redeemed from the spiritual death they inherited in the fall? In order to address all these points, the contextualisation begins with questions relating to the origins of JDS teaching. It specifically begins with the shared heritage of healing, prosperity and JDS in Kenneth Hagin's *Redeemed from the curse of sickness, poverty and spiritual death*.⁴

Academic accounts tend to conclude that JDS was a direct product of the influence of metaphysical and New Thought sources originating in the early part of the twentieth century on Kenyon.⁵ William Atkinson counters that conclusion, instead suggesting that JDS was largely the creation of Kenyon and was popularised by Kenneth E. Hagin.⁶ Since my original research throughout this thesis has repeatedly revealed new evidence of how the various features of WoF originated within the auspices of the late nineteenth century North American Healing movement and early North American Pentecostalism, the first part of Chapter 6 continues the same approach, asking if evidence of JDS can be found in those tributaries.

Some of the most in-depth and penetrating analysis relating to JDS suggests that it '...entered the church in its final form via [Kenyon].'⁷ In other words, Kenyon is regarded as the original and even sole source of Hagin's spiritual death concept. However, Chapter 5 showed that the redemption motif behind 'Hagin's conception of Christ's saving purpose...usefully encapsulated in the title of his book *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness and*

³ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 31.

⁴ Stenhammar, *The Worldview of the Word of Faith Movement*.

⁵ McConnell, *The Promise*, 117. Smail, Walker, and Wright, "Revelation Knowledge," 70. Bowler, "Blessed," 35-36.

⁶ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," iv, 251-53.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

Spiritual Death’ actually originated with Swift.⁸ Furthermore, Swift was Hagin’s source of the idea of redemption from ‘spiritual death’, not Kenyon (see 5.1.1).⁹

The influence of Kenyon on WoF teaching has been thoroughly examined in McConnell, Bowman et al and on JDS specifically by Atkinson.¹⁰ Since Swift has been shown to be an alternative source of Hagin’s spiritual death teaching, this chapter’s contextualisation section looks elsewhere for sources of Hagin’s spiritual death teaching. Beginning with Hagin, Swift and other non-Kenyon sources are the focus of the contextualisation. Specifically, the contextualisation once again begins with the writings of Kenneth E. Hagin as an entry point into the subject of Jesus Died Spiritually in order to identify the theological roots of that teaching and provide the basis for the theological analysis of JDS as a feature of the WoF system in the second section.

6.1.1 Hagin’s View of Redemption From Spiritual Death

Hagin’s clear and repeated reliance on Kenyon would arguably make Kenyon’s *What Happened From the Cross to the Throne?* the most obvious starting point for an analysis of the JDS doctrine.¹¹ The connection between Kenyon and Hagin is unambiguous and has been thoroughly analysed.¹² But while that Kenyon connection has received much attention, the influence of other sources such as Cornelia Nuzum and Swift on WoF’s integral faith and prosperity features respectively has gone virtually unnoticed (see 2.1.2 and 2.1.4). Since Swift was the driving force behind Hagin’s *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness And Spiritual Death*, which clearly links prosperity, healing and JDS-like themes, and since that book

⁸ See 5.1.1.

⁹ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 31.

¹⁰ McConnell, *The Promise*. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*. Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal."

¹¹ Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*.

¹² McConnell, *The Promise*, 3-14, 30-35.

highlights the significance of multi-dimensional redemption narrative in WoF,¹³ I begin by identifying Hagin's non-Kenyon source base using *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness And Spiritual Death* as an entry portal into the subject of JDS.

The interaction between Swift and Hagin which influenced the writing of *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness And Spiritual Death* was unlikely to have been their first meeting. That occasion saw Hagin preach to Swift's congregation over a period of several days,¹⁴ stay at Swift's house and enjoy 'great times of fellowship'.¹⁵ Such an arrangement was unlikely to have been made without a pre-existing acquaintance and therefore it is reasonable to estimate that the conversation between Hagin and Swift extends beyond the accounts stated in Hagin's writings. In any case, Hagin and Swift's key meeting occurred around the same time and potentially even before Hagin was exposed to Kenyon.¹⁶ And therefore, it is difficult to say whether Swift influenced Hagin's reading of Kenyon or another way around. What we do know is that Hagin based at least part of *Redeemed from the Curse...* on Swift's 'excellent study notes'.¹⁷ In light of Hagin's repeated unattributed and sometimes verbatim usage of other sources such as Cornelia Nuzum and P. C. Nelson as well as Swift himself,¹⁸ it is reasonable to conclude that when we read *Redeemed from the Curse...*, to some extent we are also reading a mediated version of Swift's thoughts.

Citing Galatians 3:13-14, *Redeemed from the Curse...* suggests that the foundation of JDS is the concept of 'spiritual death'.¹⁹ The text describes spiritual death as 'the first curse which God said would come upon man for breaking His law'.²⁰ The fact that Swift uses the

¹³ See 5.1.

¹⁴ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 9. *Midas Touch*, 40.

¹⁵ *Midas Touch*, 40.

¹⁶ Montgomery, *The Genuine Flow*, 39. Cf. (2.1.4).

¹⁷ Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 40.

¹⁸ See 5.1.

¹⁹ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 29. I use the book title because it is not clear whether the thoughts we read originate with Hagin or Swift.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

same text to argue that prosperity is God's first promise to Abraham and by implication all believers is noteworthy because both are set in the context of Christ's 'being made a curse for us'.²¹ In other words, every time Hagin and Swift deploy Galatians 3 in support of their redemption narrative, they are also invoking substitutional atonement along the lines of their atonement healing beliefs (see 4, 5.1 and especially 5.1.2).²² And, more specifically, the connection between 'being made a curse for us' and '...for breaking God's law' evokes a penal substitutionary understanding of the atonement.

With prosperity, JDS and atonement healing already assumed in the opening sentences of *Redeemed from the Curse...*'s chapter on 'Redemption from the Curse of Spiritual Death', Hagin then introduces trichotomy, arguing 'before we can understand death, however, we must understand that...Man is a spirit who possesses a soul and lives in a body'.²³ Hagin's insistence that readers adopt his Kenyon-derived trichotomy idiom as a prerequisite for understanding death demonstrates the particular relationship between trichotomy and spiritual death and therefore the JDS teaching, further suggesting that WoF trichotomy is a prerequisite for JDS.²⁴ It also indicates that by the time that *Redeemed from the Curse...* was published in 1983, Hagin was amalgamating what he had learnt from Swift and Kenyon four decades earlier. From that trichotomous foundation, Hagin further states that 'The New Birth is the rebirth of the human spirit. The real man is the spirit.'²⁵ For Hagin, the process of being born again centres on the rebirth of the human spirit and, following a line of reasoning that appears to stray in the direction of Gnostic levels of dualism, it is the human spirit as opposed to the body or the soul that is most 'real'.²⁶

Building on that anthropological and ontological foundation, Hagin moves on to the

²¹ Ibid., 11.

²² See 4, 5.1 and especially 5.1.2.

²³ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 29.

²⁴ Cf. (1.1).

²⁵ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 30.

²⁶ Ibid.

theological implications of his belief. He sets his theology in the context of an argument against the Seventh Day Adventist belief in ‘soul sleep’,²⁷ defining spiritual death in these terms: ‘Spiritual death is that which lays hold of our spirits rather than our bodies. Physical death is a manifestation of spiritual death. The second death is the ultimate finality of death, or the home of the spiritually dead.’²⁸ As a result of his trichotomous anthropology, Hagin refers to the human spirit as an eternal, immaterial dimension of humanity distinct from the soul and the body.²⁹ For Hagin, the death of the human spirit is what is fatal for the whole of the trichotomy. In other words, the ultimate curse is spiritual. Likewise, the ultimate blessing is spiritual. And since the human spirit is seen as superior to the soul or the body,³⁰ attainment of blessing results in physical manifestation. The problem for humanity is that ‘when Adam and Eve listened to the devil, he became their spiritual father, and they had the devil’s nature in their spirits.’³¹ In order for believers to shed that curse and receive the blessing of God, ‘...[Christ] took upon Himself our sin nature’, Hagin explains citing Hebrews 9:26. For Hagin, this passage means Christ bore ‘the nature of spiritual death’. And thus the concept of spiritual death is introduced and summarised, but the nature of the substitutionary atoning sacrifice Hagin has in mind in order to facilitate the apparent redemption of the human spirit is not explicitly discussed. Neither does Hagin make the sources of his JDS doctrine explicit. The implication is that Hagin reads redemption and

²⁷ Hagin’s decision to set his argument in the context of Adventist soul sleep is curious for two reasons: First, since the quasi-annihilationist concept of soul sleep refers to an immaterial dimension of humanity that is distinct from the body and the mind, will and emotions, Hagin would probably suggest that Adventist usage of soul actually refers to the spirit. However, the reader is implicitly expected to understand the two parties’ differing uses of soul. And second, it is curious why “soul sleep” is highlighted above other issues. Hagin’s decision to set his definition of spiritual death in the context of the hitherto unmentioned impact of Adventist teaching may suggest that Hagin propagated his JDS beliefs as a way of combatting Adventist theology. Alternatively, the uncharacteristic language of “soul sleep” could also potentially indicate that this passage comes from a source different than Hagin – one for whom the controversy of “soul sleep” is more specifically relevant and/or controversial.

²⁸ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 31.

²⁹ See Chapter 1.

³⁰ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 126.

³¹ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 31.

atonement hierarchically through the interpretative lens of trichotomy (see 1.1.2 and 1.2.2.2). Since, for Hagin, the spirit is the most real part of humanity, redemption of the human spirit has the potential to cascade across soul and body.

Just sentences after clarifying that ‘the Son of God was not born as He took on flesh’,³² Hagin’s strongly Kenyon-influenced *The Name of Jesus* raises questions about WoF Christology by rhetorically asking: ‘When was it that Jesus was begotten? When He was raised up! On that Resurrection morn!’³³ Hagin grounds his rationale in notions of substitutional atonement, explaining the purpose for this supposed post-incarnation, post-death, post-resurrection further incarnational event: ‘Why did He need to be begotten, or born? Because He became like we were, separated from God. Because He tasted spiritual death for every man.’³⁴ For Hagin, Christ had to experience spiritual death in order to atone for the spiritual death humanity inherited from Adam. And that, according to Hagin, meant ‘His spirit, His inner man went to hell in our place.’ Therefore, for Hagin, the spiritual death humanity inherited from Adam necessitated an Easter Saturday descent into hell in order to vicariously carry the spiritual punishment due to believers: ‘Physical death would not remove our sins. He tasted death for every man-Spiritual death.’³⁵

In other words, the curse of spiritual death that resulted from the fall meant that Jesus had to die spiritually as well as physically. Hagin’s specification that it was Christ’s spirit/inner man who descended highlights the crucial connection between WoF’s trichotomous anthropology and JDS. Indeed, by descending, Hagin states: ‘Jesus became sin. His spirit was separated from God. And He went down into hell in our place.’³⁶ According to Hagin’s narrative, Jesus descended to ‘the prison house of suffering – down in hell itself’

³² *The Name of Jesus*, 28.

³³ *Ibid.*, 9-11. Cf. Kenyon, *The Wonderful Name of Jesus*.

³⁴ Hagin, *The Name of Jesus*, 29.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

where Jesus ‘satisfied the claims of Justice on the behalf of each one of us, because He died as our substitute.’³⁷ By invoking the claims of a capitalised ‘Justice’ in the same sentence as stating that Christ ‘died as our substitute’, Hagin’s language clearly invokes a penal substitutionary understanding of atonement, characterising the Father as the judge sentencing His own Son to death. At some undefined point God – presumably God the Father – raises ‘Him’, capitalised and therefore referring to the Son, up. However, Hagin only refers to the resurrection of ‘His spirit and soul up out of hell.’³⁸ Throughout *The Name of Jesus* Hagin mediates Kenyon’s *The Wonderful Name of Jesus*,³⁹ so it is not surprising to find evidence of the same associations in Kenyon: ‘[Christ] became the sin-bearer the moment that God took our sins and laid them upon His spirit, then His whole spirit underwent a change and He passed under the dominion of spiritual death and Satan.’⁴⁰ Furthermore, Kenyon reads Romans 8:9 along trichotomous lines, connecting Paul’s text to Jesus’s personal incarnate spirit: ‘This Spirit of Christ mentioned here is not the Holy Spirit, but it is Christ’s own Spirit, a part of His own individual personality’.⁴¹

As we saw in the preceding chapters in relation to trichotomy and healing, capitalisation is key to understanding what Hagin and Kenyon are trying to communicate (see 1.1.1, 1.1.1.1 and 4.1.2). The complex, if not confusing, spiritual atonement process refers to the immaterial soul and spirit dimensions of Christ’s incarnational being found within WoF’s trichotomous anthropology. And therefore, the death, descent and re-birth of Christ’s spirit does not refer to the trinitarian person of God the Holy Spirit, but rather the human spirit taken on by the Son at the incarnation and then indwelt by the Holy Spirit and baptised with the Holy Spirit.

³⁷ Ibid., 33.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 10-12. Cf. McConnell, *The Promise*, 9-10.

⁴⁰ Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, 171.

⁴¹ Ibid., 211.

Historically, we must also note that JDS is a relatively late addition to Kenneth E. Hagin's doctrinal repertoire. As we have seen, the language of spiritual death appears to have coincided with Hagin's interactions with Swift in and around 1954. However, Hagin's most overtly JDS-supporting texts such as *The Name of Jesus* and *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness, and Spiritual Death* were not published until 1979 and 1983 respectively. A sympathetic contemporary source suggests 'it was about 1975 that I first heard anything from Kenneth Hagin, or from anything published by his ministry, about Jesus dying spiritually.'⁴² Therefore Hagin's espousal of JDS contrasts with his adherence to faith, positive confession, healing and even prosperity. Faith, positive confession and healing formed part of Hagin's teaching – in some form – from the earliest days of his ministry. As we saw in Chapter 5, prosperity came in around 1954, by which point Hagin's pre-existing faith, positive confession and healing teaching was developing into a more interconnected form and also being supplemented by the influence of Kenyon's writings. However, if Hagin did not teach or publish any overtly JDS-related material until roughly 21 years later in 1975, JDS cannot have been a major emphasis of his ministry prior to that time. One possible explanation is that JDS teaching was implied rather than explicit because it was not completely novel to Kenyon, Hagin and Swift.

6.1.2 Dowie's Combination of Trichotomy and Descensus as a Source of JDS Teaching

Each of the preceding chapters have demonstrated that WoF's key doctrines have precedents in Hagin's favourite healing movement and early Pentecostal sources. That being the case, when it comes to JDS it is unlikely that Swift and Kenyon are the only sources of JDS-like teaching. One example of an additional source is John Alexander Dowie, who – as we have seen in earlier chapters – is regularly cited in Hagin's writings (see, for example, 1.1.2 and

⁴² Karl Kemp, 28/04/2016, 2007, <http://www.karlkempteachingministries.com/didhedie.pdf>.

2.2.2). Indeed, Dowie is the single most cited source in *Redeemed from the Curse of Poverty, Sickness and Spiritual Death*, with Dowie's surname referenced 20 times in the short book.

The next most commonly occurring name is Lillian B. Yeomans who is cited 18 times. Since Yeomans experienced healing from drug addiction through staying in one of Dowie's healing homes,⁴³ and since Yeomans highly esteemed Dowie,⁴⁴ Dowie's direct and in-direct connections with Hagin suggest re-reading Dowie as a way of understanding how his teaching influenced the subsequent WoF JDS theology is beneficial.⁴⁵

This section conducts a thematic analysis of Dowie's writings.⁴⁶ Concluding that Dowie taught a JDS doctrine compatible with Hagin's would further undermine suggestions that WoF's JDS theology originated solely or largely with Kenyon for at least two reasons: First, because Dowie significantly predates Kenyon and, of course, Hagin. And second, because Dowie is influential to both Hagin and Kenyon.⁴⁷ That is significant because Dowie's adherence to the combination of trichotomy, faith, sensory denial, healing and potentially JDS teachings prior to Kenyon would indicate that Dowie taught a number of the same interconnected beliefs evident in the WoF movement. In other words, it would demonstrate that a proto-WoF system existed before Hagin and before the WoF movement.

Dowie's JDS-themed teaching is identifiable in his affection for the Apostle's creed, which was a repeated feature of Dowie's many services.⁴⁸ The inherent repetition of the creedal phrase 'descended into hell' in Dowie's Zion church was on a number of occasions

⁴³ Desiree D. Rodgers, "Encountering the Great Physician: The Life and Ministry of Dr. Lilian B. Yeomans," *AG Heritage* 35 and 36 (2015-2016): 10.

⁴⁴ Yeomans spoke extremely highly of Dowie: "Dr. Dowie had invincible, God-given faith in the Word of God as being the same today as it ever has been and ever will be, "forever settled," absolutely supreme and unconquerable, 'whose faith follow'", albeit with some reservations about his teaching. Yeomans, *Healing from Heaven*, 114.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 112. John G. Lake represents another faith-teaching, early Pentecostal leader influenced by Dowie who inspired Hagin. Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 91.

⁴⁶ See 1.1.2 and 2.2.2 respectively.

⁴⁷ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 230, 47.

⁴⁸ John Alexander Dowie, "The Love of God for All Men," *Leaves of Healing* 15, no. 2 (1904): 305, 30, 45, 64. Indeed, evidence of the recitation of the Apostles Creed can be found in numerous editions of *Leaves of Healing*.

accompanied by explanation of what Dowie meant by that language: 'If I could go through the very gates of hell and spoil the devil in his own domain, I would like to go. Jesus went there. He descended into hell...' ⁴⁹ Dowie was unequivocal that Christ descended into hell literally as opposed to metaphorically, experiencing hell through the physical and emotional suffering of calvary. ⁵⁰ Crucially, a sermon Dowie gave in Londonderry in late 1900 connects Christ's descent to the dead with Dowie's understanding of trichotomy. ⁵¹ Indeed, that sermon appears to have been based on a sermon delivered five years earlier in Zion Tabernacle, which focuses on trichotomy and goes on to argue that 'Christ poured out His Soul unto death' rather than his spirit. ⁵² Dowie argues his case for that point based on John 10:11: 'The word translated "Life" here is Psyche, Soul.... "The Good Shepherd giveth his Soul for the sheep"... Christ poured out His Soul unto death.' ⁵³ According to Dowie, Christ's 'Soul perished, but the Spirit is imperishable'. ⁵⁴ Dowie thereby supports what might be called a Jesus died soulishly alternative to subsequent Jesus Died Spiritual (JDS) teaching (see 1.1.2).

In Dowie's writings hell is used synonymously with *hades*. ⁵⁵ However, that does not mean that Dowie overlooks the complexity of the range of different Hebrew and Greek words rendered hell in English translations of the Bible. Indeed, Dowie is forthright that 'you cannot imagine for one moment that the Christ's spirit was ever in the condition of those who were punished for sin in Gehenna, the Tartarus, the place of punishment.' ⁵⁶ Rather, Dowie teaches that 'His spirit descended into Hades, the world of unseen spirits, both good and bad.' ⁵⁷

⁴⁹ "Reply to Dr. Gray: Zion's Onward Movement: Its Many Adversaries and Its Ever-Victorious Leader," *A Voice from Zion* 3, no. 9 (1899): 6.

⁵⁰ "The Love of God for All Men."

⁵¹ "The Chains of Good and Evil and the Sanctification of the Triune Man," *A Voice from Zion* Vol. 1, No. 7 (1901): 27. Based on talks delivered 14-15 November 1900. Cf. 1.1.2.

⁵² "Sanctification of Spirit, Soul and Body," 23.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* The message in question was delivered on 10 February 1895.

⁵⁶ John Alexander Dowie, "Early Morning Meeting," *Leaves of Healing* (1904): 809.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

According to Dowie, between his death and his resurrection Christ first went to *paradeisos* ‘the place of the redeemed...the place of the good spirits’ then ‘down to the place of the wicked spirits and preached to those spirits in prison.’ Later, Dowie continues, ‘He ascended he led captivity captive’ and ‘doubtless took multitudes from Paradise to heaven thus opening up heaven to all believers’ thereby explicitly connecting Christ’s descent with salvation.⁵⁸

Furthermore, Dowie believed the universality of God’s love expressed in Christ’s descent to *hades* demonstrates a ‘larger hope’ for salvation.⁵⁹ Indeed in a message entitled ‘Eternal Hope’, Dowie promotes the belief that Christ’s descent in some way ‘bridged’ the gulf between heaven and hell described in Luke 16:19-31.⁶⁰ However, the regular switching of temporal and eschatological focus in these passages (sometimes Dowie is talking about cleaning up hell now – in terms of social action such as temperance as well as evangelism – and other times it is clearly a post-death hope) makes it difficult to be definite about whether or not we might legitimately call Dowie’s teaching universalist.

Rather, Dowie’s ‘larger hope’ appears to be a reaction against the narrow hope of his Scottish covenanter roots and specifically against notions of limited atonement. Dowie referred to limited atonement as ‘the damning accursed doctrine that narrows down my God, and makes Him a monster’ that he picked up from ‘being born amid extreme Calvinists’.⁶¹ All this in the same message that he promotes universal atonement, saying ‘every candidate is elected’ and there is ‘salvation for everyone willing to be saved’.⁶² For Dowie, the believers’ work is to ‘...follow the Christ, and to clean out hell until there is no hell anywhere in the universe, and the eternal consolation, the eternal hope has reached every spirit saved in heaven or damned in hell.’⁶³ And therefore, by the time Dowie died, he had spent at least a

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ John Webster, "Hans Urs Van Balthasar: The Paschal Mystery," *Evangel*, no. October (1983): 8.

⁶⁰ Dowie, "The Love of God for All Men," 329. "Early Morning Meeting," 809.

⁶¹ "Fear Not," *Leaves of Healing* (1896): 169.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ John Alexander Dowie, "Eternal Hope," *A Voice from Zion* 8, no. 3 (1903): 818.

decade establishing and preaching a reasonably developed form of proto-JDS teaching emphasising the universality of atonement. That universality applied to both the range of candidates to which it applied, in contrast with notions of limited atonement, and across the whole person – spirit, soul and body. Indeed, as we have seen, the universality of Dowie's atonement even reached towards a kind of universalism.

Rather than being less developed than Hagin's subsequent teaching, Dowie's proto-JDS doctrine is actually more self-aware of the theological consequences of descent and spiritual death. Specifically, Dowie was demonstrably aware of the connection between Christ's descent to hell and the soteriological impact of such a descent. Meanwhile, Dowie's adherence to trichotomy, faith, sensory denial as well as a kind of JDS doctrine indicates the presence of the same series of interconnected beliefs later found in WoF. However, the presence of those features in Dowie does not explain where they came from. And, at the same time, the complex nature of such beliefs raises the question of whether Dowie based his teaching on existing source material. Again, the presence of such source material – especially if Dowie's sources adhered to a similar range of interconnected beliefs – could support the hypothesis that subsequent WoF theology operates as a theological system. Identifying Dowie's sources not only aids understanding of if and how the various features have been expressed over time, it would also show whether or not the interconnected features present in Dowie were novel to him or whether there was a pre-existing framework.

6.1.3 Irving's Descensus and Atonement Theology as a Precursor to JDS

Nineteenth-century Scottish restorationist Edward Irving was arguably Dowie's greatest single inspiration. A number of factors link the two. At the time Dowie was studying theology in Edinburgh, Irving's 'Holy Catholic Apostolic Church was at the height of its

popularity and influence.’⁶⁴ Upon this circumstantial foundation, we can add a similarity in restorationist approach and even in the names of the movements the two men led.⁶⁵

Furthermore, Dowie names Irving as ‘a mighty man of God’, adding that Irving ‘might have been intended to do this [Dowie’s] work, but it all failed because his brethren were jealous of him...’⁶⁶

With Dowie amongst the most cited sources in WoF literature, Irving’s theology may therefore also be an indirect source of WoF theology including the movement’s JDS doctrine. This sub-section reads Irving in search of evidence of proto-JDS teaching. As well as offering further insight into the theology behind JDS, identifying Irving as an influence on Dowie’s proto-JDS doctrine would further support the thesis that JDS did not arrive in the WoF movement as a result of either Kenyon or Hagin’s unique innovation. Furthermore, since Irving – like Dowie – also taught several of the interconnected features later evident in WoF (see 4.1.3), the presence of trichotomy, faith, sensory denial and JDS in Irving would suggest a proto-WoF framework may have been stored up in Irving and Dowie for Hagin and the WoF movement to discover.

As in Dowie’s congregation (see 6.1.2), recitation of the Apostles creed and Athanasian creed featured in Irving’s services too, making the language of an Easter Saturday

⁶⁴ David William Faupel, "Theological Influences on the Teaching and Practices of John Alexander Dowie," *Refleks* 8 (2009): 18.

⁶⁵ Compare Irving’s Holy Catholic Apostolic Church and Dowie’s Christian Catholic Apostolic Church. That detail should not be overlooked because Dowie is the “link between Irving and Pentecostalism” largely based on this commonality. Anderson draws that conclusion, citing a letter between Dowie and British Pentecostal leader Alexander Boddy dated 12 June 1903. See: Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 37-38. Cf. Derek Vreeland, "Edward Irving: Preacher, Prophet & Charismatic Theologian," *Pneuma* 5, no. Spring (2002). David Malcolm Bennet, *Edward Irving Reconsidered: The Man, His Controversies and the Pentecostal Movement* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2014).

⁶⁶ Manuel; De Zatas Coronado, Lincoln, "Interview (Reported in Part) in the Parlor of the Hotel Miramar, Havana, Cuba, February 17, 1905, John Alexander, First Apostle of Teh Lord Jesus, the Christ in the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion," *Leaves of Healing* (1905): 633. Cf. Faupel, "Theological Influences on the Teaching and Practices of John Alexander Dowie," 18.

descent a part Irving's church culture.⁶⁷ However, research in this field has so far played down Irving's influence on the development of the WoF movement's JDS teaching arguing that while 'several distinct similarities with JDS teaching can be traced' in Irving, 'no dependence [between Irving and JDS] is evident'.⁶⁸ Those similarities are: that Christ was mortal because of bearing sinful flesh; the involvement of Satan and hell in atonement; and the importance of identification.

However, the primary sources suggest Irving advanced a rather intricate reading of Christ's descent into hell, linking it with various other aspects of soteriology and pneumatology. Nevertheless, Atkinson concludes that there is no connection between those ideas and WoF. He argues that Irving's teaching is distinct from WoF largely because of the timeframes the respective parties attach to the work of the atonement. Irving, according to Atkinson, argues that Jesus bore fallen flesh from the point of incarnation and therefore atonement takes place during Christ's mortal life rather than at the crucifixion or a post-crucifixion descent into hell.⁶⁹ Without disputing Atkinson's observation relating to the differing timeframes, it is worth noting that Irving does repeatedly advance a far more developed theology of descent and atonement than has previously been identified. For example, Irving taught that atonement occurred across three planes – in Christ's pre-incarnate

⁶⁷ Sources contemporary with Irving's Catholic Apostolic (CAC) church suggest that the Athanasian creed, which includes the line "descended into hell", was recommended for daily or weekly use in the CAC. See Edward Miller, *The History and Doctrines of Irvingism or the So-Called Catholic and Apostolic Church* (London: C Kegan Paul & Co., 1878), 383. Cf. *The Liturgy and Other Divine Offices of the Church*, (London: George Barclay, 1847), 157.

Furthermore, the Apostles Creed was one of the foundational CAC standards of faith: Miller, *The History and Doctrines of Irvingism*, 396. Indeed, more than a decade after Irving's death, recitation of the Apostle's Creed remained a regular part of Catholic and Apostolic Church liturgy: *The Liturgy and Other Divine Offices of the Church*, 18. And it had a particular emphasis within Easter and Baptism liturgies, *ibid.*, 234, 35, 36, 37 and 322, 26, 27.

The CAC continued to affirm the descent into Hades, but in the sixty or so years after Irving's death they began to qualify that this was "not the place of eternal torment". John Bate Cardale, *Readings Upon the Liturgy and Other Divine Offices of the Church*, vol. 1 (London: G. J. W. Pitman, 1893), 479. Cf. Jacob Jamani Nantomah, "Jesus the God-Man: The Doctrine of the Incarnation in Edward Irving in the Light of the Teaching of the Church Fathers and Its Relevance for a Twentieth Century African Context" (University of Aberdeen, 1982), 291-318.

⁶⁸ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 206.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 206-08.

life, mortal life *and*, crucially, post death. Irving therefore provides the prototype for JDS by drawing parallels between the substitutionary work of Christ and the Levitical rules relating to animal sacrifice:

...combined with the crucifixion of his body there was the crucifixion of the natural desires and feelings, of the mind. This, indeed, seems clearly typified in the sacrifices for sin under the Law...The temple was the type of our Saviour's body, in which his human soul was given as an offering for sin; while his body was carried without the gate of Jerusalem, and there crucified...⁷⁰

Irving is therefore explicit in his belief that Christ's salvific work went beyond the physical. And given that Irving's anthropology was ostensibly, although not uniformly, dichotomous, references to soul should be read as meaning the spiritual and psychological dimensions delineated in later WoF trichotomy.⁷¹ Furthermore, writing on the Lord's Prayer, Irving describes a spatial understanding of omnipresence that allows for a descent into hell (an important underpinning of JDS) without either a rupture in the trinity or contradicting his own Christology.⁷²

Because Irving specifies that the Father held 'the devils by His stern right hand' during the work of atonement, the adoption of a posture of apparent passivity could also be seen as the Father taking an active role in penal substitution at some point after the cry of dereliction and Christ's death on the cross. At the same time Irving suggests God does this by passively but knowingly relaxing His grip on 'the devils' in a way reminiscent of Job 1 – where Satan asks God for permission to attack Job. Indeed, this is a parallel that Irving

⁷⁰ Edward Irving, "On the Human Nature of Christ," *The Morning Watch* 3 (1891): 133.

⁷¹ *Miscellanies from the Collected Writings of Edward Irving* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1865).

⁷² *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, ed. G. Carlyle, vol. III (London: Alexander Strahan, 1865), 143.

himself identifies later, describing Job as a type of Christ.⁷³ As a result, Irving's reading both allows for God's presence in hell and provides room for a fresh understanding of an Easter Saturday descent as well as an embryonic-JDS motif that bypasses the more egregious JDS characterisations depicting Christ as in some way 'Satan's prey'.⁷⁴

Referring to 'the experience of the Lord's soul between death and the resurrection,'⁷⁵ Irving also addresses the idea of 'Christ in the separate state' and argued that a descent into hell was a necessary feature of atonement:

I doubt not the blessedness of the separate state, but most surely believe that the bodies of his people do rest united unto Christ, ready to come with Him at His coming, I as surely believe that they enjoy this estate of rest and blessedness only in virtue of that conquest over death and over hell which He achieved by **descending into death and hell**.⁷⁶

Indeed, Irving is specific that the immaterial plane of atonement takes place after the crucifixion, meaning his words cannot refer to pre-death sufferings being a metaphorical hell:

Who, when He had overcome Satan in the world, and condemned sin in the flesh, did lay aside His fleshly mantle, and in **spiritual nakedness** descend into a spiritual battle with spiritual wickednesses, with the thrones and dominions and powers of darkness. And when He had overpowered them in their own **strongest region**. He re-turned, and took His body out of the hands of the hungry grave...⁷⁷

⁷³ Ibid., V: 271.

⁷⁴ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 214.

⁷⁵ Irving, *Miscellanies*, 210.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 210-11. Emphasis added.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 211. Emphasis added. Kenyon also wrote of JDS in terms of victory: "To know that Satan is defeated by our Substitute, and that his defeat is eternal, makes our Redemption a blessed reality. To know that

For Irving, Christ's victory over hell was more glorious and a harder fought battle than his victory 'over the powers of the world and the flesh' and he explicitly and repeatedly identified a 'separate state' and locates Christ there battling the 'powers of darkness'. The identification of hell as evil's 'strongest region' suggests that Christ's descent went beyond traditional understandings of the harrowing of hell, meaning *hades* or some abode of the dead that was not a place of punishment, and therefore bring him closer to JDS. The reference to spiritual nakedness harks back to the Adamic fall, characterising Christ as a second, but redeeming Adam. And finally, the 'tarrying' reference connects Irving's JDS with Acts 2 and Pentecost – something that is explicitly taught in WoF circles at least since Hagin.⁷⁸

Irving's fifth volume of *Collected Writings* expounds on such proto-JDS views and reveals that Irving explicitly held that Christ's 'incarnation did not terminate at His death, but that He descended into the place of separate spirits and did a work therein.'⁷⁹ For Irving this begins with a three-fold 'humiliation' – in heaven, where Christ endured Satan's and the angels' rebellion;⁸⁰ on earth, where Christ took on flesh and thus a fallen nature;⁸¹ and thirdly in 'the contradictions of sinful men' also on the earth.⁸² To this Irving adds 'another scene of humiliation....beyond the portals of life' that begins 'with the hidings of His Father's countenance, and consummated within the veil of death'.⁸³ That this subject is something of a focus for Irving is evidenced in the fact that he spent six pages on the first three

that defeat was administered to him by our Substitute, and set to our credit, so that in the records of the supreme court of the universe we are the masters of Satan and that Satan recognizes that in the name of Jesus we are his rulers – when the heart takes this in as the body knows heat and cold, then faith is unnecessary." Kenyon, *In His Presence*, 90.

⁷⁸ Hagin, *The Name of Jesus*, 29-32.

⁷⁹ Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 112-13.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 270-72.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 272-76.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 277.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 284-96.

‘humiliations’,⁸⁴ but then devotes twice as much to the descent immediately after it. The latter 12-page passage argues that in crucifixion and death ‘Satan hath combined such a power against [Christ] on the cross, that he prevaieth to the extinction of life; to the separation of body and spirit; to the burial of His body in the earth, and its retention for three days in the prison of the tomb; to the drawing down of His soul into hell, or the abode of separate spirits’.⁸⁵ In other words, the disembodied immaterial dimensions of Jesus entered what is known as the separate state during the Easter Saturday descent into hell. Here the ‘surpassing horror’ of the final conflict between ‘the Prince of Life and the prince of darkness’ took place.⁸⁶

In addition, Irving taught that the atonement took place across three temporal zones: ‘a threefold region, deeper and deeper still of trial and...suffering; the first, commencing from the temptation in the wilderness, and extending over His life; the second, commencing from the Garden of Gethsemane, and extending to His death; the last, commencing from those excruciating words, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” and extending over the period of His disembodied being.’⁸⁷ Irving’s three dimensions can also be read as corresponding to the human body, soul and spirit respectively. And therefore, while the word trichotomy is not used, it is functionally evident in Irving.⁸⁸ As a result, considerably more continuity with WoF is evident than has previously been identified – whether later WoF sources (specifically Kenyon and Hagin) were aware of Irving’s writings or not.

Therefore, rather than being only ‘superficially’ similar to WoF JDS doctrine, Irving’s teaching offers a strong nineteenth century precedent, albeit indirect, for WoF JDS

⁸⁴ In heaven, on earth and in the contradictions of sinful men.

⁸⁵ Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 288.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 289.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ In the decades after Irving, the Catholic Apostolic Church began using explicitly trichotomous language, describing humanity as consisting of “spirit, soul, and body”. John Bate Cardale, *Readings Upon the Liturgy and Other Divine Offices of the Church*, vol. 2 (London: G. J. W. Pitman, 1893), 119.

teaching.⁸⁹ In light of Irving's proto-JDS precedent,⁹⁰ the spiritual death and descent into hell elements of JDS cannot, therefore, be seen as novel or unique to mid-twentieth century WoF. Neither can JDS be described as being rooted in metaphysical sects which were not established at the time Irving was writing and which have little if any interest in substitutionary atonement.⁹¹ Rather, Dowie and Irving demonstrate continuity of emphasis and understanding of proto-JDS concepts. Furthermore, both Dowie and Irving arrived at their proto-JDS understanding in connection with other features that would later be key WoF doctrines. However, despite several stylistic similarities of approach and even naming, direct historical connections between Irving and Dowie's teaching are illusive.

Like Hagin's revelation of prosperity, JDS surfaces later chronologically than the establishment of Hagin's faith, positive confession and healing doctrines – all of which are predicated on his trichotomous understanding of anthropology. So, taken together with the examples found in Irving and Dowie, the combination of trichotomy and the substitutionary understanding of atonement gained through healing appear to point a multi-dimensional atonement and corresponding redemptive work relating to the human spirit, soul and body. With that in mind, the theological analysis considers how atonement and redemption operate in relation to JDS.

6.2 Redemption, Atonement and Jesus Died Spiritually

The contextualisation found that Hagin's JDS teaching began with the concept of multifaceted redemption from sickness, poverty and spiritual death. As a result of WoF's

⁸⁹ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 210.

⁹⁰ For example, in 1927 John G. Lake offered his own version of Irving- and Dowie-like Jesus died soulishly teaching. John G Lake, *John G. Lake on Healing* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2009), 19, 78-79.

⁹¹ As Bowman succinctly summarises, "New Thought teachers...roundly and utterly reject the ideas of sin and substitutionary atonement." Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy, 2nd Edition*, 39, Cf. 36.

trichotomous anthropology, spiritual death was equated with the death of the human spirit at the fall. The WoF emphasis on the differing parts of the trichotomy was subsequently connected with the movement's understanding of redemption and substitutionary atonement. Pairing WoF's highly substitutional understanding of atonement with its trichotomous anthropology leads to the idea that each fallen dimension of the human constitution requires a corresponding death or suffering on the part of the saviour in order to provide the benefits of redemption. For example, the physical death of the saviour is understood as providing for physical healing in the atonement (see Chapter 4). Continuing along those lines, the spiritual death of humanity inherited at the fall is understood as requiring the spiritual death of the saviour in order to provide new life to the hitherto dead human spirit. Furthermore, since WoF's trichotomous anthropology is somewhat hierarchical, the elevation of the human spirit over the soul and the body results in the 'unsurprising conclusion' that the spiritual dimension of Christ's atoning work was the most important.⁹² Read this way, the scourging of Christ and Christ's physical death at Calvary offers obvious associations with the physical dimension of the human constitution. More specifically, WoF's trichotomous anthropology leads to a multi-faceted understanding of redemption based on a multi-dimensional view of substitutionary atonement. Developing the atonement-provision motif that originates in WoF's reading of atonement healing (see 4.1.3), WoF teaching requires a spiritual death of the saviour to correspond with and provide redemption for the death of the human spirit that occurred as a result of the fall.

In order to achieve that end, WoF draws on pre-existing teaching found in its source base, which highlights the creedal belief that Jesus 'descended to the dead' as a means of explaining what happened between Good Friday and resurrection morning. The JDS doctrine basically suggests that Christ's work of atonement went beyond torture, corporeal death,

⁹² Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 124.

burial and the grave and into 'hell'.⁹³ There are a range of further narratives associated with JDS including the highly problematic ideas that in conjunction with this Easter Saturday descent Jesus took on Satan's nature, became sin and therefore had to undergo a soteriological experience of his own in order to be born again at the resurrection.⁹⁴ Aside from outlining arguments for such teaching, proponents of these doctrines offer little in the way of critical evaluation of their theology and articulations of the detail of how such ideas function.⁹⁵ Therefore, this second part of the chapter begins by analysing WoF's view of redemption and atonement as it pertains to JDS, specifically engaging with questions of when and how atonement was achieved.

The writings of Kenneth E. Hagin continue to represent both an entry point into the subject and model WoF teachings for the purposes of this analysis. And while a significant portion of Hagin's teaching is derived from Kenyon and other healing movement and early Pentecostal sources, owing to their common theological themes as well as their historical connections, the work of Edward Irving and John Alexander Dowie is used as both theological reference points and counterpoints to the historically subsequent WoF position.

6.2.1 Descent, Death and Jesus Died Spiritually

WoF teaching that Jesus descended into hell as part of his atoning work is amongst the most controversial features of the JDS doctrine. One reason for such controversy is because some critics rule out Christ's engagement in any kind of descent into any kind of hell, despite the line 'He [Christ] descended to the dead' in the Apostle's creed.⁹⁶ Other problems include

⁹³ McConnell, *The Promise*, 119. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 161-62. Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 110-15.

⁹⁴ McConnell, *The Promise*, 119. See Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 14.

⁹⁵ "A Theological Appraisal," 82-89.

⁹⁶ Wayne Grudem, "He Did Not Descend into Hell: A Plea for Following Scripture Instead of the Apostle's Creed," *JETS* 34, no. 1 (1991). Cf. Matthew Y. Emerson, *"He Descended to the Dead": An Evangelical Theology of Holy Saturday* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 4.

macabre suggestions that Christ took on a satanic nature.

Referring to the first point,⁹⁷ Wayne Grudem concludes that the inclusion of ‘He descended to dead’ in the Apostle’s creed is simply an ‘old mistake’ that should be ‘dropped...once for all’.⁹⁸ However, that view is contradicted by a diverse range of scholars that accept that Christ experienced both physical and immaterial death.⁹⁹ These include those examining the issue from Catholic perspectives as well as the latest evangelical scholarship – not to mention Dowie and Irving.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, other WoF-specific critics accept historic Christian teaching that Jesus descended to the dead.¹⁰¹

Secondary sources have analysed JDS theology in relation to the atonement,¹⁰² but no previous analysis has considered the JDS theology in light of trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity. Meanwhile, primary source references to the subject are imprecise and at times contradictory. Kenneth E. Hagin, for example, explicitly states that the atonement takes place ‘through the cross’.¹⁰³ And yet elsewhere he writes ‘Jesus became sin. His spirit was separated from God. And He went down into hell in our place,’¹⁰⁴ which suggests Hagin believed substitutionary atonement took place in ‘hell’ as well. In order to clarify WoF understandings of JDS and atonement, I now further analyse Hagin’s most direct references to JDS.

⁹⁷ Grudem, "He Did Not Descent into Hell," 110.

⁹⁸ Compare Grudem, "He Did Not Descent into Hell," 109. Joel B. Green, *1 Peter* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 128.

⁹⁹ Gerald Bray, *James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude*, ed. Thomas Oden, C., vol. XI, *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000), 106-14. Emerson, *He Descended to the Dead*, 64, 88.

¹⁰⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990). Joel B. Green, *1 Peter* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 128. Emerson, *He Descended to the Dead*.

In contrast to Grudem, Irving writes that "...after His death He [Christ] descended into hell to preach unto the spirits in prison". Edward Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, ed. G. Carlyle, vol. II (London: Alexander Strahan & Company, 1864), 202.

¹⁰¹ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 163-64.

¹⁰² Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 214-22. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 160-78; Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal." Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 112-16.

¹⁰³ Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 30-31, 45-46.

¹⁰⁴ *The Name of Jesus*, 30-31.

Kenneth E. Hagin's 1998 letter to charismatic Baptist minister Karl Kemp is probably the most succinct summary of Hagin's JDS doctrine.¹⁰⁵ Kemp characterised Hagin's JDS teaching as 'a rather serious error' about which he raises series questions.¹⁰⁶ One of Kemp's central concerns was that JDS undermines Christ's sinlessness. Answering Kemp's questions about JDS, Hagin affirms that Jesus did not commit any sin, but rather 'was made sin with our sins.' This crucial clarification suggests that, within the context of Hagin's strongly penal substitutionary understanding of atonement, Christ remains ontologically innocent and yet in some sense juridically 'made sin'. Put another way, Hagin teaches that Christ has borne the sins of humanity in an idiomatically comparable manner to the Isaiah 53:4 and 1 Peter 2:24 passages so central to WoF understandings of atonement healing (see 4.1.3).

However, since Christ 'was made sin', Hagin continues, 'He had to pay the penalty for sin.' Based on Romans 6:23, Hagin argues that this meant death. Hagin further specifies that 'made sin' means 'spiritual death, which is separation from God.' Hagin does not elaborate of how Jesus was 'made sin' or why that trumps Christ's innocence of committing any sin. Neither does he engage with 1 Peter 2:22-24's specification that Jesus bore our sins 'on the cross' rather than in hell. However, staying within the theological milieu of Hagin's source base,¹⁰⁷ the footnote in A. S. Worrell's translation of that verse sheds some light on the subject: '*By whose bruise ye were healed*; healed in spirit, soul and body, through the sufferings of Jesus Christ in our behalf.'¹⁰⁸ While the text emphasises that Jesus carried humanity's sins in his body, Worrell evidently reads body to mean the whole of the trichotomous human. Furthermore, Worrell refers to the plural 'sufferings of Jesus Christ' as providing a basic rationale for understanding Jesus' redemptive death to be multi-faceted and

¹⁰⁵ Kemp explains that he started following Hagin's ministry in 1966 but subsequently heard Hagin's JDS teaching in around 1975. In four short paragraphs Hagin encapsulates what elsewhere is spread across several different books. Kenneth E. Hagin, "Letter to Karl Kemp", 4 May 1998.

¹⁰⁶ Kemp "Did Jesus Die Spiritually?"

¹⁰⁷ See 2.2.3.

¹⁰⁸ Original emphasis retained. Worrell, *The New Testament Revised and Translated*, 349.

corresponding to spirit, soul and body, rather than somatologically alone.¹⁰⁹

In contrast to Kenyon, Hagin's references to JDS generally avoid precise detail relating to exactly what takes place in hell during the descent.¹¹⁰ True to that pattern, Hagin's account in his letter to Kemp concludes by jumping from support for JDS to quoting Romans 8:11, 'the same Spirit Who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in us', which emphasises Christ's resurrection by the Spirit as opposed to His spiritual death. And therefore, for Hagin, Christ's descent to the dead, even His spiritual death, is directly connected to the resurrection and the new life of the believer.

Furthermore, Hagin's final sentence in his letter to Kemp provides additional insight into what JDS means to its major proponents. If Hagin understood Jesus to have descended to hell, to have died spiritually (see 6.1.1), that 'his spirit was separated from God',¹¹¹ and also that the Holy Spirit raised Jesus's spiritually dead spirit from hell, it could not have been God the Holy Spirit that died spiritually. Hagin either contradicts himself or the divine person of Christ remains intact as a person in the Trinity. One resolution of that apparent conflict is found by returning to WoF's primary interpretative lens, trichotomy.¹¹² At this point in our understanding of the JDS doctrine, trichotomy interfaces with the WoF substitutionary atonement reading obtained via the movement's understanding of divine healing. In other words, based on the movement's view of God as trinity, WoF espouses a trichotomous anthropology (see 1.2.2.2). Since the incarnate Christ is both human and divine, in his humanity He is both spirit, soul and body and anointed with as well as being a temple of the Holy Spirit. Upon His death, Christ's body was laid in the tomb, but His human spirit and

¹⁰⁹ For Kenyon, believing that Christ suffered plural deaths was key to the establishment of his JDS doctrine. Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 160-61.

¹¹⁰ Compare: "His [Jesus's] spirit absolutely became impregnated with the sin nature of the world." Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 63. And "Christ not only bore our sins (our deeds and acts of wrongdoing); He bore our sin (man's sin-nature)." Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Present-Day Ministry of Jesus Christ*, 11th printing ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1983), 9.

¹¹¹ *The Name of Jesus*, 30-31.

¹¹² See 1.

soul descended into hell.¹¹³ Crucially, according to this line of reasoning, the Holy Spirit never died. Rather, it was the Holy Spirit that raised the human spirit of Jesus up.

Consequently, WoF may teach that Jesus died spiritually, but the movement inevitably also teaches that his human spirit was resurrected pneumatologically. The result is that the resurrection of Jesus's human spirit occurred specifically by the action of God the Holy Spirit. With that in mind, one result of such a pneumatological emphasis is that the possibility of an arguably more pneumatic and Pentecostal reading of the atonement can be found in the treacherous territory of JDS theology.

6.2.2 Anthropology, Death, Descent and Jesus Died Spiritually

WoF primary sources lack detail and clarity when it comes to communicating their understanding of the theological implications of their teaching. And, as we have seen throughout this thesis, WoF sources also often lack critical self-evaluation. However, the same cannot be said across the range of sources feeding into WoF. As we saw in the contextualisation, John Alexander Dowie repeatedly referred to Christ's descent, at times demonstrating an awareness of the problematic nature of suggestions that Jesus died spiritually (see 1.1.2 and 6.1.2). Similarly, Edward Irving wrote repeatedly and in-depth about Christ in the separate state (see 6.1.3), extensively scrutinising the theological impact of such beliefs and concluding that the temporal joy and peace of believers as well as their eternal repose was 'procured' by 'the sufferings of Christ' in 'the flesh' in 'hell'.¹¹⁴ Since Irving was a key source for Dowie as well as for others connected to the WoF movement, Dowie and Irving provide a unique opportunity both to further knowledge of the theological impact of WoF JDS teaching and to act as a critical counterpoint.

¹¹³ Hagin, *The Name of Jesus*, 33.

¹¹⁴ Irving, *Miscellanies*, 210.

6.2.2.1 Spiritual Death and Descent

Like Hagin, Irving also emphasises the pneumatological dimension of both Christ's death and descent as well as His resurrection. Furthermore, Irving refers to the separation between the Father and the Son in pneumatological terms: '...the Father's blessed presence and sweet influences were hidden from his [Christ's] soul,¹¹⁵ and he was left to struggle in naked manhood with all manhood's enemies; until, having endured the whole of man's bitter portion for transgression, the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him in the separate state, and he burst the gates of hell, and rifled the house of corruption, and entered triumphantly into the ways of eternal life.'¹¹⁶ Here, Irving situates Christ not only in the 'separate state' of disembodied human spirit and/or soul, but specifically in 'the house of corruption'. If Christ was situated in 'the house of corruption' at that point, he cannot also have been in paradise, something that again makes Irving's teaching closer to JDS than has previously been observed.¹¹⁷ Likewise, if Christ 'entered triumphantly into the ways of eternal life' subsequent to His experience the wrong side of 'the gates of hell' and the 'house of corruption', Irving must be referring to suffering in hell and therefore some kind of spiritual death.

Kenyon's articulation is cruder and focuses on concepts of identification, penal substitution and satisfaction atonement-like ideas, but is not completely dissimilar to Irving: 'We know that the Physical Death of Jesus would not satisfy the claims of Justice, so it was necessary that He become identified with our union with the devil, that He actually die

¹¹⁵ While Irving showed some evidence of functional trichotomy, he generally used anthropologically dichotomous terms and therefore "soul" here is best understood as referring to the immaterial dimension of humanity. Cf. 6.1.3.

¹¹⁶ Edward Irving, *The Day of Pentecost: The Baptism with the Holy Ghost* (London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1831), 34. Davies summarises Irving's position thus "and in accordance with the axiom of the distinction of natures, the human nature alone suffered in the sufferings of Christ!" Paul Ewing Davies, "An Examination of the Views of Edward Irving Concerning the Person and Work of Jesus Christ" (University of Edinburgh, 1928), 99-104.

¹¹⁷ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 171.

spiritually and become a partaker of Spiritual Death.’¹¹⁸ Kenyon associates spiritual death with the redemption of humanity as a result of the prioritisation of the human spirit within his trichotomous anthropology. Similarly, Irving views Christ’s descent in more generally immaterial and specifically pneumatological terms.

These particularly JDS-like examples of Irving’s writing come from a treatise entitled *The Day of Pentecost*, which further connects Irving’s theology of descent with his understanding of atonement and pneumatology. Espousing a kenotic Christology, Irving characterises his understanding of Christ’s descent to the dead as a quest necessary to prepare humanity for the reception of the Holy Spirit: ‘During this period of suspended power within himself, there was also a suspension of it with his disciples...But when he returned from his perilous voyage back again to his well-beloved little flock, that very night he breathed on them and they received the Holy Ghost.’¹¹⁹ Here Irving’s understanding provides both context and counterpoint to WoF JDS, offering the opportunity to view atonement in terms of pneumatological impact and especially with regard to Pentecost.

Later in the same sermon, Irving repeats the kenotic language of ‘empty manhood’, explaining that believers have the Holy Spirit as ‘a baptism...as he [Christ] had it as a baptism from the day of his baptism until the day of his agony’.¹²⁰ In other words, if spiritual death is separation from God – as Hagin and WoF describes it – spiritual death began with withdrawal of the baptism of the Holy Spirit so Christ would endure death in ‘naked manhood’.¹²¹ Within that un-Spirit-baptised state, Christ endured ‘the angels of hell and death’ within ‘the horrors and thick darkness’ and ‘the confines and captivity of death and hades’.¹²² Again, the language of ‘horror’, ‘captivity’ and ‘death’ are not compatible with

¹¹⁸ Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, 137.

¹¹⁹ Irving, *The Day of Pentecost*, 34-35.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹²¹ Irving uses the language of naked manhood five times in *The day of Pentecost*. *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*, 17.

paradise as a place of the righteous dead,¹²³ and cannot be described as life. So, since they are situated within the immaterial realm of the separate state, what Irving recounts can reasonably be described as spiritual death, which in turn gives greater warrant to the use of Irving as both a reference point offering greater understanding of JDS and as a counterpoint in areas where the less well articulated WoF JDS doctrine is problematic.

While it might seem counter-intuitive, descent and spiritual death are not completely morbid. Post-resurrection, Christ lives in ‘the state of redemption and immortality’, according to Irving,¹²⁴ which implies that the death and captivity of the descent result in great victory. Specifically, ‘...The Holy Ghost is now His to give’.¹²⁵ Irving therefore directly connects his theology of descent with the reconciliation of humanity to the divine, since ‘Christ is only known and felt through the operation of the Holy Ghost...’,¹²⁶ and the Son’s resurrection into the role of second Adam the Spirit-baptiser and ‘life-giving spirit’.¹²⁷ In doing so, the stage is set for the divine faith of the WoF movement (see 2.2).

Indeed, Irving describes the incarnate Christ as ‘Adam, sent not into paradise, but into hell... enduring all the tortures of hell with no defalcation of His faithfulness.’ Irving generally used anthropologically dichotomous terms when it came to describing the human constitution (see 6.1.3). However, Irving also insisted on ‘the opposition between flesh and spirit’,¹²⁸ for him, ‘spirit must dominate or all is wrong’ (see 1.1.1).¹²⁹ And that emphasis on the domination of the spirit is reminiscent of WoF’s prioritisation of the human spirit within the movement’s trichotomous anthropology. Since WoF’s trichotomous anthropology acts as an interpretative lens across all the features examined so far, and since the trichotomy

¹²³ Emerson, *He Descended to the Dead*, 25-35.

¹²⁴ Irving, *Collected Works*, II, 536.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:45.

¹²⁸ Davies, "The Person and Work of Jesus Christ," 64.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

teaching prioritises the spiritual dimension, it follows that both the three-part emphasis of trichotomy and the prioritisation of the spiritual dimension will be evident in JDS teaching. With that in mind, I now analyse how notions of spiritual death can be read in terms of body, soul and spirit. Due to the thematic similarities between Irving's teaching and subsequent WoF doctrine, and due to Irving's apparent impact on pre-WoF sources such as Dowie, I engage with Irving's writing as both a source of JDS-like teaching and a critical interlocutor.

6.2.2.2 Spiritual death 'in the flesh'

Jesus descended, in some sense, 'in the flesh', according to Irving, with a view to 'conquering in flesh and blood all the enemies of flesh and blood, both on earth and in hell'.¹³⁰ 'There are not two kinds of flesh, "one flesh of men"; there are not two kinds of faith, "one faith." What Jesus through faith did in flesh, flesh is at all times competent to do.'¹³¹ And yet, the uniqueness of Christ's divine state shines through the Son's incarnate self: '...here is a man, a very man, by distinction the Son of man, enduring heaps of trouble and affliction from every outward and inward quarter, and carrying Himself under it, not like a man, but like a God'.¹³² In other words, where the first Adam fell, Christ, the second Adam stands, thereby redeeming both the outward (body) and inward (spirit and soul) dimensions of humanity.

The effect is recapitulation to something equivalent to the Edenic state. Irving describes the first Adam as: 'The most happy, the most rich, and the most powerful of men', terms compatible with WoF readings of Adam as explicated in Stenhammar's, *Eden*

¹³⁰ Irving, *Collected Works*, II, 221.

¹³¹ *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, ed. G. Carlyle, vol. IV (London: Alexander Strahan, 1865), 539.

¹³² *Collected Works*, II, 221. Compare with A. J. Gordon, "Why Lifted Up?," in *Grace and Glory: Sermons for the Life That Now Is and That Which Is to Come* (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1895), 101.

Redeemed.¹³³ In addition to that allusion to what would later become the language of prosperity teaching, there are also references to what would later be known as positive confession doctrine. Describing a hypothetical opulent and powerful king as a ‘petty power’ with ‘puny influence’ compared with humanity’s prelapsarian condition, Irving explains: ‘[Adam]...by virtue of his first creation, commanded upon the earth, as God commandeth in the heavens...’ In other words, the first Adam’s pre-lapsarian state brought with it the power of creative speech on the earth. And since, according to Irving, Christ’s suffering on earth and in hell restores believers to an Adamic position, the power of creative speech is available to believers today.

By contrast, in the absence of such faith: ‘...God has given the world to Satan who rules it, and under its present constitution the world is “as full of sin as it can be crammed”’.¹³⁴ Such theology pre-supposes a supporting anthropology upon which Irving’s JDS-like understanding rests: ‘...the higher parts of his nature were placed under the feet of the lowest; and that sensual being, which in paradise cost him nothing, came now to be exalted over the head of that intellectual and moral being which was then his crown of glory’,¹³⁵ language reminiscent of WoF’s trichotomous anthropology and faith-versus-sense-knowledge dichotomies. Davies summarises Irving’s understanding in similar terms: ‘the curse lay in the exaltation of the sensual part of man’s nature over the spiritual.’¹³⁶ As a result, WoF notions of faith are theologically tied to trichotomous anthropology and JDS and its

¹³³ The context is that Irving is arguing that bodily labour is the result of the fall and that that same bodily labour reinforces hardness of heart in terms of receiving the gospel because it habituates temporal survival in what appears to a harbinger of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. With that in mind, he praises the Methodists that have “found out the language proper to the creature, and is working a passage into his soul...”. Edward Irving, *Sermons, Lectures and Occasional Discourses*, vol. III (London: R. B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1868), 1054, 59. Irving’s solution? Feed them the word of God: “...teach them that they have a soul as well as a body for which to be anxious, and to use exertion, that “man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”. This in order to: “fill his mind with the knowledge of salvation, to gladden him with hope, and electrify his whole spiritual man groaning in oppression, with the redemption of Christ, and the regeneration of the Spirit”. Ibid., 1063. Cf. Davies, “The Person and Work of Jesus Christ,” 64.

¹³⁴ “The Person and Work of Jesus Christ.”

¹³⁵ Irving, *Sermons, Lectures and Occasional Discourses*, III, 1059.

¹³⁶ Davies, “The Person and Work of Jesus Christ,” 66.

interconnected atonement theology. Stated differently, JDS rests on the foundations of trichotomy and the trichotomous framework culminates in JDS.

6.2.2.3 The Death of Christ's Human Spirit

In the absence of any explicit primary source discussion of the choice of atonement theories evident in WoF theology (see 4.2.2.1), and in light of the remarkable – and hitherto unacknowledged – degree of consonance between Irving's writings and WoF theology, further analysis of Irving's choice of atonement theories offers additional insight into the theology underlying WoF JDS theology. This approach helps demonstrate whether JDS was simply Kenyon's creation or something that evolved from New Thought or whether there is another explanation.¹³⁷ Such a theological analysis may further demonstrate which atonement theories feed into WoF theology, adding specificity to any analysis of JDS and its place in any structure of interconnected theological features. And since Irving is an antecedent to WoF teaching relating to other features such as healing, his writings provide insights into the interconnected nature of the various features found in WoF.

While unarticulated within WoF, JDS's emphasis on the restoration of an Edenic state combined with the importance the movement attaches to the role of Christ's atoning work in providing for healing, prosperity and redemption from spiritual death equates to a ransom-recapitulation model of atonement. That JDS-like theology, in turn, originates with 'the fathers...[and] some of the Roman Catholic mystics'.¹³⁸ Referring to Peter's Pentecost sermon as recorded in Acts 2:24, Irving explains how that passage '...open[s] a great deep, in the coasting of which I find little help or guidance from our clear-headed Protestant divines, but not a little from many of the fathers of the primitive [church] and some of the mystics of

¹³⁷ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 7, 18, 62-63, 140, 247.

¹³⁸ Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 291.

the Roman Catholic Church.’¹³⁹

While WoF sources offer little to articulate understanding of the relation between the divine and human natures in Christ, Irving emphasised that both were present ‘without confusion’.¹⁴⁰ However, Irving’s kenotic Christology also enables him to be equally clear that it was purely the human nature of Christ that endured what that suffering included,¹⁴¹ with Christ’s human nature further understood in terms of body and soul.¹⁴² That understanding of Christ’s human constitution, in turn, enabled Irving to teach that it was the immaterial human nature of Christ that descended to the dead.

6.2.2.4 The Death of Christ’s Soul

Different definitions of what constitutes soul and spirit make understanding what is meant by the death of Christ’s soul a complex undertaking. For his part, Irving refers to three types of death: ‘death temporal, or the death of the body; death spiritual, or the extinction within the soul of its divine affections; and death eternal, or the everlasting separation of both soul and body from God’.¹⁴³ Not only are the three categories of death broadly similar to Hagin’s three kinds of death,¹⁴⁴ they also roughly correspond with body, soul and spirit respectively, resulting in another example both of Irving’s functional adherence to trichotomous anthropology and to the reliance of descent narratives in general and JDS in particular on trichotomous anthropology. The difference is that what Irving terms spiritual death corresponds most closely to what Hagin might term the death of the soul. While Irving supports the belief that Jesus descended to the dead immaterially, he is not clearly in support of the view that what Hagin refers to as the human spirit descended. Based on these

¹³⁹ Ibid. Cf. Irving, *Sermons, Lectures and Occasional Discourses*, III, 866.

¹⁴⁰ Davies, "The Person and Work of Jesus Christ," 100, 04.

¹⁴¹ Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 146.

¹⁴² Davies, "The Person and Work of Jesus Christ," 104-05.

¹⁴³ Irving, *Sermons, Lectures and Occasional Discourses*, III, 1034-35. Cf. 915.

¹⁴⁴ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 31.

references, it is probably more fitting to say that, like Dowie, Irving believed that Jesus died soulishly rather than spiritually (see 1.1.2 and 6.1.1).

Immediately before the crucifixion, Jesus underwent a ‘trial of His strength to endure its hardships’, said Irving: ‘Having a human soul full of anticipation and feeling, as we see through all His life, especially in the garden of Gethsemane’.¹⁴⁵ Read in light of Irving’s multi-phased understanding of atonement as a process that began at the incarnation, this makes Christ’s suffering in Gethsemane an atoning work corresponding to the redemption of the human soul (see 4.2.4, 6.1.3 and 6.2.2).¹⁴⁶

And yet Irving also wrote that the human being has a spirit, that the human spirit is superior to the mind and body; and that the human spirit can be redeemed.¹⁴⁷ Such a conclusion again suggests functional trichotomy (see 6.1.3) since, on different occasions, Irving is explicit that humanity can be described in terms of spirit, soul and body. For example, when articulating the mechanism of redemption, Irving particularly specifies that people should be instructed on the subject of ‘their relations to the spiritual world, by evolving the spirit that is in them...and to every spirit in heaven up to the Spirit of God’.¹⁴⁸ The language of ‘evolving’ the human spirit performs a similar function to Stalker’s reordering of the trichotomy discussed earlier in the thesis (see 1.1.1 and 4.2.1).¹⁴⁹ First, it provides humanity with the necessary spiritual connection for divine communion, revelation and faith; and second, provides the basis for belief that – with a correctly ordered trichotomy

¹⁴⁵ Irving, *Collected Works*, II, 221.

¹⁴⁶ *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 289.

¹⁴⁷ “Being ignorant of the spiritual world, and most of them ignorant they have a spirit, and none of them believing in its redemption, and regeneration, and mighty power over the carnal mind and the fleshly lusts, they conceive all religions to be much a par to political and social advantages.” *Sermons, Lectures and Occasional Discourses*, III, 1228-29.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1084-85.

¹⁴⁹ As Nantomah explains: “Thus in Irving, as well as in Athanasius, the subversion of man’s system has gone to such a state that they both sound as if the pathological point of view prevails over the purely ethical. The whole system, not just his morals, is in need of redemption.” Nantomah, “Jesus the God-Man: The Doctrine of the Incarnation in Edward Irving in the Light of the Teaching of the Church Fathers and Its Relevance for a Twentieth Century African Context,” 295.

– divine intervention in the miraculous and provision should flow freely:¹⁵⁰ ‘They must be taught that they have souls capable of responding to the word of God, as well as bodies capable of bearing burdens, that they have a spirit capable of the finest forms of love and affection, of hope and ambition, as well as a spirit capable of sourness, sullenness, and revenge...’.¹⁵¹

Furthermore, Irving’s theology of descent argues that Jesus suffered: ‘All that flesh can bear’, specifying: ‘death He shunned not, nor hell, but took the lowest and the worst cast of it’.¹⁵² And ‘What Jesus through faith did in flesh, flesh is at all times competent to do.’¹⁵³ In other words, it was a spiritual death, but it was also a carnal death – meaning it was the fallen human nature and spirit of Jesus that descended. While this death and descent to the dead is undertaken by the human nature of the incarnate Christ, it is empowered by faith: ‘acquitting Himself in every place of His trust as a man, by believing in God’.¹⁵⁴ Indeed, for Irving the incarnation was undertaken in order for Jesus to become a faith exemplar for humanity:

Jesus proved that a mortal man lacketh only to have faith in God in order to have the presence and power of God with him in all his ways; that if our faith were as a grain of mustard-seed we should say unto this sycamine-tree, ‘Be removed and planted in the sea,’ and it should be done.¹⁵⁵

The combination of incarnation, death, descent, atonement, faith and a proto-positive

¹⁵⁰ Again, see 1.1.1 and 4.2.1 respectively.

¹⁵¹ Irving, *Sermons, Lectures and Occasional Discourses*, III, 1084-85.

¹⁵² *Collected Writings*, IV, 539.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. See also: “For, if it was proper for Christ to fight the battles of flesh against the wicked spirits, in suffering, weak, and dying flesh, by the hand and help of faith alone, then must it be proper to us also; for between Him and us there is no difference, either in the inherent qualities of our flesh, or the reality of that faith whereby His flesh...was made mighty in word and deed over all the power of the enemy.” Ibid.

confession doctrine into a single redemption narrative is an innovation that foreshadows later WoF theology. Indeed, complete with a reference to Mark 11:23, that combined narrative is striking in its similarity to subsequent WoF teaching. The implication is that either the combined features result in JDS or JDS results from that combination of theological features.

6.2.2.4 Anthropology and Jesus Died Spiritually

One crucial question relating to JDS theology is the location of the work of the atonement.

By insisting that the atonement was ‘an overtly physical act’,¹⁵⁶ and ‘the cross *alone*’ was the ‘the means by which sin was atoned for’,¹⁵⁷ some critics of WoF’s JDS doctrine limit atonement to the cross and preclude the possibility of an immaterial dimension to the atoning work. Their concern is that belief in substitutionary atoning work other than what physically took place on the cross undermines the sufficiency of Christ’s blood.¹⁵⁸ As a result, such JDS critics adhere to the pre-supposition that Jesus did not descend to the dead or at least that any kind of descent played no part in the atoning work (see 6.2.1). WoF proponents and their sources move in the opposite direction, beginning with the belief that atonement must have included a spiritual dimension, resulting in their JDS doctrine.

Texts such as Hebrews 9:11-14 and Hebrew 10:1-16 situate the completion of the atoning work in heaven. Indeed, Hebrews 9:11-12 is explicit that Christ ‘entered once for all into the holy places...by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption’.¹⁵⁹ Describing Christ as the ‘high priest’ of the ‘the more perfect tent’, the writer of Hebrews refers back to the typology of the Levitical priesthood. Leviticus 16:14, for example, specifies that, for the Levites, atonement took place when the blood was sprinkled on the altar. If, as

¹⁵⁶ McConnell, *The Promise*, 119.

¹⁵⁷ Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 112.

¹⁵⁸ McConnell, *The Promise*, 119, 28-29. Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 113.

¹⁵⁹ *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 269n22.

Hebrews 9:14 details, atonement was made by the blood of Christ and in the heavenly holy of holies, that must have taken place post-resurrection and after ascension. Because Jesus's blood could not have been sprinkled before it was shed and because his priestly work could not take place until the ascension, the completion of the atonement was subsequent to the physical work. Consequently, the need for a broader understanding of atonement stretching beyond the physical torture and death of Jesus is required.

One alternative is to read Hebrew 9:10 as meaning the 'once for all' atonement took place in Christ's physical death on the cross. But such a reading does not account for the atoning work that took place in the pre-crucifixion scourging referred to in Isaiah 53:4-5 and 1 Peter 2:24. Even if the atoning work was limited to the physical Good Friday suffering of Christ, the physical dimension of the atoning work must have been broader than a single particular act in order to incorporate both the scourging and the crucifixion.

Such is WoF's emphasis on the belief that redemption was achieved by the heavenly fulfilment of the Old Testament type, some sources tend towards promoting redemption above atonement as if redemption was not dependent on the atoning work: '...under the Old Covenant, the people could only obtain the forgiveness or atonement for sins...But under the New Covenant, because of the redemptive work of Christ, we can have the remission of sins.'¹⁶⁰ According to that view, atonement only covers sin, but redemption results in the new creation.¹⁶¹ And 'Jesus purchased our redemption at the Cross', Hagin explained. Since Hagin taught JDS, we have to interpret his usage of 'the Cross' as referring to a broader atoning work. But in any case, to continue within the parameters of Hagin's explanation, redemption could not have been purchased without a redemptive currency, which must have been the atoning work. That being the case, the false dichotomy between atonement and

¹⁶⁰ Hagin, *Bible Prayer Study Guide*, 195. Cf. *The Present-Day Ministry of Jesus Christ*, 8.

¹⁶¹ Irving, on the other hand, emphasised the "at-one-ment" and "reconciliation" of the atonement: Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 146.

redemption is dissolved.

Another alternative to limiting the atoning work to Christ's physical death on the cross, is to view death as multi-phased episode within a broader narrative of atonement. Kenyon taught along these lines, beginning with the incarnation which he understood to be God manifesting in flesh in order to be a substitute for fallen humanity.¹⁶² More specifically, Kenyon saw the purpose of the incarnation as being the recreation of the human spirit, in order to 'renew his mind, bringing it into subjection to this re-created spirit' so this 'new man gains ascendancy over...physical body'.¹⁶³ In other words, the purpose of incarnation was to facilitate the re-alignment of the trichotomy (see 1.1.1 and 4.1.5). All this towards the goal of imparting righteousness to humanity inherited from the historically pre-existent doctrine of imparted righteousness espoused by Dowie, Spurgeon, Montgomery and others (see 1.1.2 and 2.1.3).¹⁶⁴ For Kenyon, the incarnation and Christ's vicarious suffering functioned as the mechanism for both saving humanity from the curse of sin and imparting righteousness. However, Kenyon so exalted Christ's sinlessness that his understanding verges on Docetism and Apollinarianism (see 1.1.1 and 1.2.2.2): 'Jesus was conceived without sin. His body was not mortal.'¹⁶⁵ The obvious question is: if Jesus's human body was not mortal, how could Christ have been fully human? Kenyon arrives at his conclusion on the basis of the medical reasoning that foetuses produce blood only when the sperm and egg unite and not from the egg alone, with Kenyon further suggesting that Mary provided the egg and the Holy Spirit the sperm.¹⁶⁶ From here, Kenyon reflects his anthropology into his Christology, concluding that Jesus' blood was free from original sin on the basis that the Holy Spirit provided Christ's physical blood via the sperm. On that point, Kenyon contrasts with Irving who insisted that

¹⁶² Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 11.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

Christ inhabited fallen, even ‘sinful’ flesh.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, again in contrast with Irving,¹⁶⁸ Kenyon confusingly denies Mary’s contribution to the incarnation, suggesting: ‘Jesus did not partake of the mother’s nature, she simply clothed Him with sinless flesh’.¹⁶⁹ Despite his acknowledgement that ‘there could be no Incarnation unless there was a perfect unity of Deity and humanity’,¹⁷⁰ Kenyon describes Jesus’s body as ‘neither mortal or immortal’, but rather a ‘perfect’ prelapsarian ‘human body’.¹⁷¹ Irving, on the other hand, argued atonement and reconciliation were dependent on Christ taking on fallen flesh: ‘had He taken humanity in an unfallen state...there could otherwise have been neither reconciliation nor atonement between God and man.’¹⁷²

Consequently, Kenyon’s theology requires the impartation of sin into the saviour and substitute in an act of cosmic injustice in order for the impartation of righteousness to flow to the believer in a corresponding act of divine mercy: ‘His body did not become mortal until the Father laid our sin nature upon Him when He hung on the cross...only then could He die. When this happened, spiritual death, the nature of Satan, took possession of His Spirit.’¹⁷³ Later, in a chapter on Gethsemane, Kenyon explains: ‘Jesus became sin. His spirit received that terrible thing that came to Adam in the Garden...’¹⁷⁴ In other words, Kenyon equates the fall with spiritual death and spiritual death with the acquisition of ‘the nature of Satan’. Exactly what Kenyon means by the nature of Satan is not clear, but since Kenyon identifies this moment as the point at which Jesus in his view became mortal, Kenyon could be referring to a fallen human nature coalescing alongside Christ’s divine nature.

¹⁶⁷ Lee Byung-Sun, “‘Christ’s Sinful Flesh’: Edward Irving’s Christological Theology within the Context of His Life and Times” (University of Edinburgh, 2011), 88-89.

¹⁶⁸ Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 135-37.

¹⁶⁹ Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 21.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁷² Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 146. Indeed, Irving called the suggested that “Christ had a humanity in some way diverse from ours” was “heresy”: *ibid.*, 147.

¹⁷³ Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 20.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

As in other examples of WoF theology, the inconsistent capitalisation of ‘Spirit’ to mean God the Holy Spirit versus ‘spirit’ to mean the human spirit in these passages is confusing (see 1.1.1, 1.2.2.2, 4.1.2). It could mean the Holy Spirit in the first instance and the human spirit of Christ in the second or it could simply be an unintentional inconsistency. Since there is none of the discussion of the different natures of Christ you find, by comparison, in Irving,¹⁷⁵ it could just be that both references hold the same meaning for Kenyon and that Kenyon is unaware of how problematic his assertion that Satan took possession of the Holy Spirit is. Thus, Kenyon’s incarnational Christology provides an example of how WoF theology and the JDS doctrine in particular would benefit from critical evaluation in light of its own source-base. Specifically, Irving’s teaching on atonement and his proto-JDS writings present the opportunity to introduce the concepts of human and divine natures in the incarnate Christ. Such an introduction and subsequent critical dialogues would serve to clarify and potentially improve Kenyon’s articulations of his Christology as it pertains to atonement and JDS. And, in turn, WoF doctrine based on Kenyon would also be positively impacted.

The concept of Christ’s human and divine natures is evident in pre-WoF sources such as Irving and Dowie. Their engagement with that topic illustrates the continuing connection between anthropology and Christology that are also made in subsequent WoF teaching. For his part, Dowie appears to have erred in roughly the opposite direction to Kenyon, emphasising Christ’s human nature almost at the exclusion of His divine nature. Furthermore, Dowie’s sermon entitled ‘The humanity of Christ’ reveals that Dowie connected his own kenotic Christology together with a form of JDS, something that further emphasises the system-like connections between the trichotomous anthropology, kenotic Christology and

¹⁷⁵ For example, Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 22-27, 59-60. Cf. Davies, "The Person and Work of Jesus Christ," 100, 04.

JDS: 'He came to us in His humanity, and did not resume His Divine Nature, even when He rose from the dead, because He wears that human nature still'. According to Dowie, Christ's human nature was taken on 'for the purposes of Atonement, Mediation, and Restoration', making Christ the 'Great High Priest who wears a glorified human nature' and now 'Christ retains a human nature.'¹⁷⁶ Dowie's strongly kenotic Christology contrasts with Kenyon's non-mortal view and better facilitates the identification dimension of substitutionary atonement so important to Kenyon and across WoF (see 1.1, 1.2.2, 3.1 and 4.2.2.2). For example, Kenyon contradicts himself when he says 'It is finished' means '[Christ] as a man, and a Jew...fulfilled the Mosaic Law...He had done everything that was necessary for our redemption as a perfect man' because he also argues that Christ became a curse on the tree.¹⁷⁷ Probably as a result of Kenyon's influence, Hagin runs into the same Christological problems: 'The new Man, Jesus Christ, had no death in Him. He was not born as we are born. He didn't have the spiritual nature of death—the devil—in Him.'¹⁷⁸ As a result, the identification of Kenyon and Hagin's non-mortal Jesus is inhibited by his manifestation into unfallen flesh. On the other hand, Irving and Dowie's engagement with both the divine and human natures of Christ avoids those hindrances. Nevertheless, like Kenyon after him, Dowie moves from Christ's substitutional and high priestly role to JDS-inclusive atonement stating: 'I am glad that you know that He descended into hell', thereby further connecting trichotomy, atonement and JDS¹⁷⁹

Dowie's condemnation of the 'doctrinal error' of 'conditional immortality' in the same 'Spirit, Soul and Body' sermon is mirrored in Hagin's criticism of 'soul sleep' in *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness and Spiritual Death*.¹⁸⁰ Kenyon also situates his original

¹⁷⁶ John Alexander Dowie, "The Humanity of Christ," *Leaves of Healing* 15 (1904): 40.

¹⁷⁷ Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, 171. *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 20.

¹⁷⁸ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 33.

¹⁷⁹ Dowie, "The Humanity of Christ," 40.

¹⁸⁰ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 30.

JDS teaching in *The Father and His Family* (1915) in the context of annihilationism.¹⁸¹

Similarly T. J. McCrossan, the source of much of Hagin's theology of atonement healing (see 4.1.1), published *The Bible and its hell and its ages* as a reaction against universalism and annihilationism over a decade after *Bodily healing and the atonement* was released.¹⁸²

Reactions against conditional immortality and annihilationism, therefore, provide a consistent theological impetus for JDS. At the same time, as McCrossan's *The Bible and its Hell* demonstrates, reactions against conditional immortality and annihilationism tend to bring with them a greater emphasis on hell than was otherwise present.

Irving offered a wider-still scheme of atonement across three planes of 'humiliation': pre-incarnate, incarnate and beyond death (see 6.1.3). Read in light of trichotomous anthropology (see 1), the incarnate and beyond-death planes correspond to the spirit, soul and body of the human nature of Christ. Temporally, the same phases correspond with Christ's incarnation, life on earth, and ministry on earth. These phases culminate in the sufferings of Gethsemane, the rejection of the Jews, the taunts of the Roman battalion, the scourging and Christ's death on the cross. Read that way, the physical suffering associated with Christ's arrest, flogging and ultimate death on the cross correspond to the body. The suffering of Gethsemane corresponds to the soul. Meanwhile, the descent of Easter Saturday corresponds to the immaterial dimensions of humanity (the soul and spirit).

6.2.3 Critical Evaluation: Integral, Optional, Redeemable?

The differing views of Kenyon, Dowie and Irving in relation to whether the soul or spirit descended present us with some choices: it was either Christ's human spirit or human soul that descended, or it was both. For Kenyon and Hagin, it was clearly the spirit. For

¹⁸¹ Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, 207.

¹⁸² T. J. McCrossan, *The Bible: Its Hell and Its Ages* (Glendale, California: The Church Press, Farson & Sons, 1941), 5-33, 115-42.

Dowie, it was definitely not the spirit, but rather the soul (see 1.1.2, 6.1.2 and 6.2.2.3). In Irving's case, he said it was the spirit of the human nature of Christ, but Irving referred to that dimension of his Christology in terms reminiscent of what WoF sources would call the soul (see 6.2.2.3). Analysing the doctrine of the harrowing of hell in light of 'Apostolic writings', MacCulloch suggests Christ's spirit ascended and his soul descended to Hades, where it remained in 'the Father's care'.¹⁸³ MacCulloch's suggestion of a simultaneous ascending and descending of the immaterial dimensions of the incarnate Logos combined with Irving and Dowie's emphasis on the differing natures of Christ help address Kenyon and WoF's JDS-related Christological weaknesses because they explain how the ever-living God might die and yet live, how He might descend to hell as one cursed and yet remain sinless, how He was resurrected by the Holy Spirit, and how all that takes place without rupturing the trinity.¹⁸⁴ Questions relating to WoF's specific understandings of the early church views on the compartmentalisation of Hades do not serve my goal of understanding and critically evaluating the interconnected nature of WoF's theological features, but further research on that point is also likely to yield greater clarity in WoF teaching.¹⁸⁵

In answer to some critics' desire to centre the atoning work solely on Christ's physical suffering and death on the cross, and in light of Irving's multi-faceted and multi-dimensional understanding of atonement, it becomes apparent that – rather than taking away from the importance of Christ's blood – WoF teaching has the potential to further exalt it and at the same time integrate it with it with Pentecost. Read this way, WoF's emphasis on 'The blood' develops atonement on from Calvary's tree, broadening it out into incarnation, life, death,

¹⁸³ J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell: A Comparative Study of an Early Christian Doctrine* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1930), 63n2. MacCulloch's suggestions that the "the word 'buried' covered a belief in the Descent" and that "the thought of the burial of the Body at once called up that of the presence of the Soul in Hades" are also noteworthy. Ibid., 71.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Kenyon, for example, demonstrates at least some understanding of the concept of compartmentalisation in the separate state. Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne*, 60.

descent, resurrection and ascension.¹⁸⁶ The same approach also provides a crucial connection to Pentecost. Indeed, such Pentecostal-derived teaching on ‘the blood’ is what brings together the phases of the entire incarnation-to-ascension work of redemption.¹⁸⁷ Far from relegating Pentecost to ‘non-event’ status,¹⁸⁸ JDS and WoF’s pneumocentric anthropology read through Irving’s theology of descent actually provides further theological impetus for Pentecostal outpouring in the lives of believers. In addition, setting Irving in dialogue with WoF’s historical sources not only helps to clarify and refine WoF’s emphasis spiritual death, hell and JDS but actually challenges contemporary proponents to recognise and acknowledge the importance their theology already puts on resurrection, Pentecost and ascension.

Irving avoids trinitarian issues via the aforementioned broadening of Christ’s atoning work and via his nuanced understanding of the two natures of Christ. At the same time, Irving’s writings challenge limited understandings of the believer’s access to the supernatural: ‘Adam was the possessor of fallible reason, the Second Adam is the possessor of infallible reason; the life of the first Adam was no security to his members against ignorance and error, the life of the Second Adam is. And the difference cometh not from redemption alone, but from inhabitation of God consequent upon incarnation: it pertains not to the Son of Man under the law, but to the Son of Man baptized with the Holy Ghost: it is not of the human, but the superhuman; it is the human filled with God through the incarnation of the Son and the inhabitation of the Father.’¹⁸⁹ Indeed, Irving’s use of the term ‘superhuman’ is strikingly similar to Kenyon’s albeit far less nuanced and more problematic

¹⁸⁶ Hagin, *Zoe: The God Kind of Life*, 38, 44. By referencing his own teaching on the name of Jesus, which in both Hagin and Kenyon is intertwined with JDS, Hagin explicitly links JDS with his doctrine of Christ’s blood. Positive confession is also linked to “the blood” a few pages earlier. *The Precious Blood of Jesus* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1984), 34-36. Brim, *The Blood and Glory*.

¹⁸⁷ Ben Pugh, “‘There Is Power in the Blood’ – the Role of the Blood of Jesus in the Spirituality of Early British Pentecostalism,” *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* (2005).

¹⁸⁸ Perriman, *Faith, Health and Prosperity*, 116.

¹⁸⁹ Irving, *The Day of Pentecost*, 71.

use of the term ‘superman’ in relation to the new creation.¹⁹⁰

Read and revised through Irving, rather than rupturing the trinity,¹⁹¹ JDS becomes an example of the trinity in operation – JDS becomes a trinitarian descent. God the Father ‘descended’ in His fatherly role by allowing the incarnation in the full knowledge that it would result in the sacrificial death of Jesus and His descent to the dead.¹⁹² God the Son – in Irving’s words – ‘condescended’ to be incarnated and then was further humiliated by descending to the dead.¹⁹³ God the Spirit descended by leading God the Son into the wilderness of the desert as a foreshadow of His descent into the ultimate wilderness – the dead, sustaining Him there by God-breathed Scripture. All three dimensions of condescension are at the same time atoning, redemptive and, therefore, ultimately victorious.

Conclusion

WoF’s JDS doctrine suffers from its imprecision, naivete relating to the theological impact of certain statements and lack of nuance. All those weaknesses – especially those evident in Kenyon – are then transmitted via Hagin into subsequent teaching where they are accepted and propagated relatively uncritically in a similar manner to weaknesses found in other theological features (for example, the ‘speaking spirits’ positive confession sub-doctrine, see 3.2.1 and 4.1.1).

Notwithstanding its many Christological and Trinitarian weaknesses, unmodified JDS functions as a means of transmitting the notion of a restored Adamic state in order to virtually deify humanity via the second Adam’s spiritual death, something that – read within the WoF milieu – necessitates the second Adam’s vicarious spiritual death in order to restore

¹⁹⁰ Kenyon, *Two Kinds of Life*, 21.

¹⁹¹ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 25.

¹⁹² Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 147.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 270.

humanity's spiritual life in substitutionary atonement.¹⁹⁴ However, that goal is undermined by both the history and theology of the movement's own sources, with A. B. Simpson, for example, arguing that 'Adamic perfection' would simply result in another fall.¹⁹⁵ Instead, Simpson argues, in line with Irving, that being united with the second Adam and thereby lifted 'to a higher plane' was the ultimate goal of redemption.¹⁹⁶

Hagin's writings demonstrate that revelation of faith and positive confession followed by divine healing arrived first historically. Belief in financial prosperity and JDS came later. That movement might sound like a conceptual leap, but the trajectory suggested by the historical development of JDS in WoF is also supported by the role and function of each feature in the emerging theological system. Built on the foundation of its trichotomous anthropology, combined with the substitutionary emphasis of the movement's theology of atonement revealed in its view of divine healing, and via the emphasis on redemption WoF inherits from its understanding of prosperity, the trichotomy-, faith-, positive confession-, healing- and prosperity-combination points towards acts of redemption corresponding with all three dimensions of humanity – spirit, soul and body. As Hagin wrote, 'Before we can understand death...we must understand...Man is a spirit who possesses a soul and lives in a body...' ¹⁹⁷

JDS teaching did not originate with Hagin or Hagin's sources such as Kenyon, MacMillan, Swift or Nuzum. Rather, there are clear examples of pre-WoF sources propagating various versions of JDS-like teaching up to a century before Hagin. The writing

¹⁹⁴ Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Believer's Authority*, Second, 27th printing, 1996 ed. (Broken Arrow, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1984), 27. Hagin produced that edition, but the book is based on, if not largely a reproduction of, J. A. MacMillan's work, something that is further evidence that JDS-like thinking did not originate with Hagin and is demonstrable in sources outside Kenyon. See McConnell, *The Promise*, 69-71.

¹⁹⁵ Simpson, *Days of Heaven Upon Earth*, 140.

¹⁹⁶ Nantomah, "Jesus the God-Man: The Doctrine of the Incarnation in Edward Irving in the Light of the Teaching of the Church Fathers and Its Relevance for a Twentieth Century African Context," 55, 95, 135, 313, 31.

¹⁹⁷ Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty*, 29.

of Edward Irving emerges as both an early precedent for pre-JDS teaching as well as a likely source for Dowie's comparable teaching. But JDS-like teaching did not originate with Irving either. Just as Bosworth teaches in relation to prosperity,¹⁹⁸ Irving says we must return to 'the divines' to find the roots of his proto-JDS teaching (see 6.2.2.3). That realisation raises the question of whether other WoF sources were also reading early church writings. There is certainly the suggestion that Kenyon read 'the Church Fathers' specifically Polycarp and Irenaeus.¹⁹⁹

However, there are also numerous examples of discontinuity between WoF sources and subsequent WoF teaching when it comes to JDS. For example, the greatest disparity between Irving and Dowie's proto-JDS doctrine is on the question of universalism. While Dowie leant towards universalism by claiming Christ bridged the impassable gulf in His descent, Irving pointed the opposite way, suggesting the descent ensured the gulf's impassability.²⁰⁰

As that example suggests, the lack of critical engagement with each subsequent generation of JDS-like teaching combined with the inflexibly understood, unmodified features in the emerging WoF system resulted in Christological and trinitarian flaws in JDS doctrine. Those flaws mean the strongest condemnation of the WoF movement, including charges of heresy, is generally associated with JDS.²⁰¹ And such charges have potential implications for any emerging WoF system. Since unmodified JDS teaching is so connected to trichotomy, faith and positive confession as well as the movement's wider understanding of atonement, if JDS must be rejected, its departure impacts the other features too. However, if some kind of JDS can be retained, there are similarly significant implications for those that

¹⁹⁸ Bosworth, *The Key to the Windows of Heaven or God's Financial Plan, with Supplement, Should Sinners Tithe?*

¹⁹⁹ Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 228.

²⁰⁰ Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, V, 298.

²⁰¹ Bowman, *The Word-Faith Controversy*, 23, 158, 76.
McConnell, *The Promise*, 117.

have flatly rejected it. Furthermore, if Atkinson is correct in saying a ‘spectrum of perspectives is discernible, in which different authors offer increasingly diluted versions, until hardly any “JDS” element is to be seen’,²⁰² then WoF theology cannot be reliant on JDS. And JDS cannot be an essential part of a system.

My analysis shows that JDS is implied from the trichotomy entry point onwards through the different WoF features and their associated articulations of WoF doctrine. To put it another way, JDS is heavily reliant on WoF trichotomy and trichotomy points towards JDS. Rigid and simplistic readings of trichotomy would have a negative impact on the importance of the physical death of the cross, making it exclusively a means of purchasing redemption corresponding to the physical body of believers. However, if WoF’s anthropology is read more in terms of triunity, Irving’s wider atonement narrative offers useful language to broaden such a narrow understanding. Rather than a simplistic incarnation and atonement story, the incarnation, death, burial, descent, resurrection and ascension can all be seen as phases in the grand narrative of atonement. The result is that Christ models the resurrection of a whole, en-Spirited person, ascending to complete the work of atonement so the Spirit can be poured out on all flesh.

That point raises the question of where JDS fits in relation to the other features. JDS is so interconnected with the trichotomy entry point that one might argue that JDS should be positioned in parallel with trichotomy. Another option is to fuse healing in the atonement and JDS into a broader notion of WoF atonement. However, my conclusion is that JDS belongs at the end for historical-theological and theological reasons.

Throughout this research each chapter has traced the development of WoF through the work of its central populariser and proponent Kenneth E. Hagin. In parallel with that, each theological feature was contextualised in its historical setting in order to draw out the role of

²⁰² Atkinson, "A Theological Appraisal," 14.

each feature as well as the function of the system. Historically, that methodology clearly shows that while JDS is rooted in sources far older than Hagin (such as Irving and the church fathers), it was not apparent as a part of Hagin's teaching until relatively late in the development of the WoF movement. Rather, the historical development of WoF theology roughly parallels the theological function of the interconnected features. In other words, the depth and complexity of the combination of interconnected features developed as its key sources acquired understanding of the various doctrines that became key to the movement and connected them with each other. That being the case, it is impossible to place an unknown feature before a known focal point.

Theologically, something similar is also true. The potential for JDS is evident from the trichotomy entry point onwards, but trichotomy does not point to JDS in and of itself. WoF trichotomy must be combined with the movement's particular emphases on substitutionary atonement and the trichotomy-redemption narrative exemplified in texts such as *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness and Spiritual Death* in order to result in JDS theology. Furthermore, as we saw with prosperity in Chapter 5, combining the different features in a different order can result in quite different theological emphases. In the case of this chapter, JDS begins with the movement's anthropological interpretative lens, flows from its confession of faith and moves forward into a mechanism of manifesting what is believed to be promised in scripture, resulting in the realisation that the manifestation of a holistic redemption is both required and provided for in the multi-dimensional atoning work of the saving, healing and Spirit-baptising Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

Beginning with trichotomy, Word of Faith theology operates as a system of six interconnected features assembled in this order: Trichotomy, Faith, Positive Confession, Healing, Prosperity and JDS. To some extent, the historical development of the system determines the order in which the various features operate. However, the theological dependencies of each point reinforce their position, role and function. In addition to the discovery of a WoF system, along the way I made a number of discoveries relating to the origins, role and function of each of the six features in relation to one another.

First, the historical work of some of the most influential secondary sources does not bear the weight of the theological conclusions attached to it. Specifically, McConnell's historical conclusion that Kenyon was a clear and often unattributed source of Kenneth E. Hagin's writings remains compelling. But the suggestion that Kenyon derived his writings from 19th century North American New Thought metaphysical sources coupled with the conclusion that WoF is rooted in New Thought is not. Rather, it overreaches to the point of genetic fallacy.¹ With the connection between Kenyon and New Thought still undemonstrated, and with the influence of New Thought on Hagin and WoF also unproven, my research re-contextualised WoF primarily within a Healing Movement and early Pentecostal setting. That made it possible to show both the historical and narrative theological interconnections between trichotomy, faith, positive confession, atonement healing, prosperity and JDS. Strong roots for subsequent WoF teaching relating to each feature and various combinations of the features can be found in well-known Healing Movement and early Pentecostal sources.

Second, piecing together the fragments of existing secondary source analysis of WoF

¹ De Arteaga, *Quenching the Spirit: Discover the Real Spirit Behind the Charismatic Controversy*, 244-46.

theology suggested that trichotomy, faith, healing, positive confession, prosperity and JDS operate in an interconnected and systematic fashion. That general realisation impacts the way we read the controversial theology of the Word of Faith movement, forcing us to interpret each feature in light of the others. And that in turn provides the opportunity for a literally more constructive theological debate when it comes to correcting the weaknesses and inconsistencies of Word of Faith theology.

Contextual findings

The contextualization dimension of my research methodology resulted in several significant contributions to the knowledge of WoF theology. The discovery of Cornelia Nuzum as a foundational and hitherto unrecognized source of Kenneth E. Hagin's understanding of faith (see 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2) as well as Hagin's positive confession teaching (see 3.1.1 and 3.1.2) is the foremost example. Despite being a key source of Hagin's personal understanding of faith – an understanding that Hagin associates with his own miraculous healing – and despite being the earliest written source consulted by Hagin outside the Bible, Nuzum's influence on WoF has been overlooked.

Hagin's significant reliance on T. J. McCrossan, P. C. Nelson and Bosworth – all of which owe something to A. J. Gordon's writings – for his healing teaching is also underacknowledged (see 4.1.1 and 4.1.3).

Similarly, John Alexander Dowie and – through Dowie – Edward Irving, stand out as early sources directly and indirectly feeding into Kenneth Hagin Snr.'s healing teaching as well as his understanding of the trichotomy (see 1.1.2), faith (see 2.2.2) and Jesus Died Spiritually doctrines (see 6.1.2 for Dowie and 6.1.3, 6.2.2.3 and 6.2.3 for Irving).

In addition, A. A. Swift is a significantly underacknowledged source of Hagin's prosperity teaching (see 5.1.1 and 5.1.2).

Together, those sources – along with the undisputed importance of Kenyon – constitute two levels of WoF source base: First, those directly utilized in the work of Hagin; and second, those that influence Hagin's sources of WoF theology.

Since historical origins have played such an important part in the theological conclusions of existing WoF research,² the discovery of numerous examples of Hagin's direct reproduction of early Pentecostal sources, much of which is unattributed, as well as evidence of the importance of broader range of cited source material than is generally accepted, has significant theological implications.

Specifically, the so-called Kenyon connection is overstated. While the work of Kenyon is a key source of WoF teaching via Kenneth E. Hagin, Hagin demonstrably engaged with enough non-Kenyon source material to come to many very similar conclusions relating to trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS without Kenyon's influence. And therefore, WoF is not dependent on Kenyon for its theology.

In addition, since there is an abundance of evidence for non-New Thought (and often non-Kenyon) sources of WoF theology, the so-called Kenyon connection thesis linking WoF via Kenyon to New Thought should be set aside. Indeed, the presence of all the other sources mean New Thought is less theologically important to WoF than previous sources suggest. Even if convincing evidence of a historical connection between Kenyon's writings and New Thought were subsequently to be found, there is now clear evidence that Healing movement and early Pentecostal sources were the predominant inspirational wells from which Kenyon, Hagin and – through them – WoF was drawn.

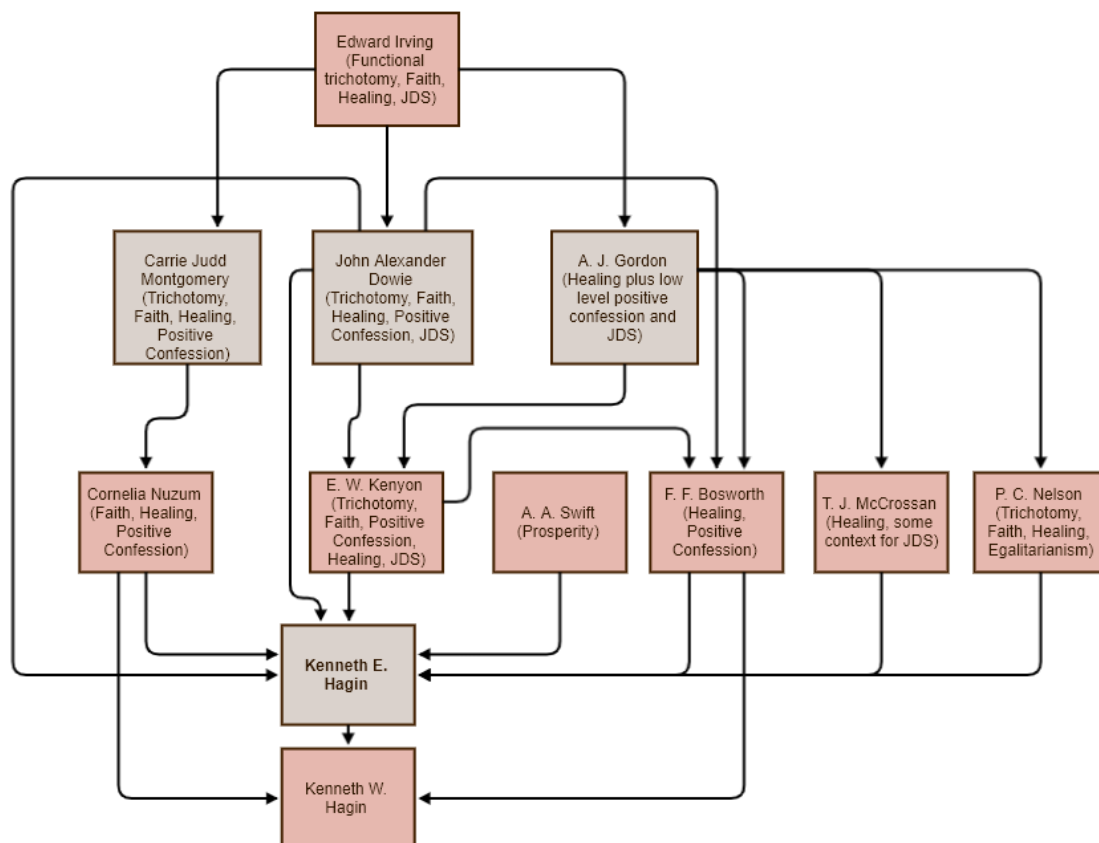
Indeed, to use another metaphor, a new WoF family tree should be drawn. If Hagin is the father of WoF, and if Kenyon is godfather, Nuzum and Swift are additional godparents and Irving is some kind of long-lost grandfather of WoF theology. Kenneth E. Hagin's role as the

² See Farah, *Pinnacle of the Temple*. See also McConnell, *The Promise*; Farah, "A Critical Analysis."

father of the WoF movement should also be further redefined. There is little question relating to his role as populariser and propagator of the message. However, the range of sources that Hagin draws upon is wider and his usage more significant than has previously been demonstrated, with Hagin repeatedly re-using existing material and sometimes merging the ideas of his sources.

In other words, Hagin was more of a compiler of the six theological features as opposed to their originator. As far as the origination of the combination of theological features is concerned, several sources adhere to most, if not all of the trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS combination in parallel with or separately to Kenyon or Hagin.

Figure 2 - WoF source base relational diagram



Theological conclusions

From the analysis of trichotomy onwards, it has been apparent that WoF's constituent

features are interconnected (see 1.2 and 1.2.1). Analysing all six features reinforces the existence of such dependence, adding that subsequence is also evident. Trichotomy's emphasis on the elevated state of the human spirit points in the direction of the divine faith element within WoF's wider doctrine of faith. From here, the trichotomy-faith combination leads to positive confession, which is itself both dependent upon and to some extent a result of trichotomy and faith (see 3.2.1).

Together, those features represent the immaterial sub-phase of the system, with faith acting as the immaterial conduit for the believed promises of God (see 3.2 and with positive confession acting as the immaterial-material bridge (see 5.2.1). The material outcome of WoF healing theologically depends both on the immaterial sub-phase (faith and positive confession combination – (see 4.1.2) and the movement's strong emphasis on the power of atonement to provide redemption across all dimensions of the movement's trichotomous anthropology (see 4.1.2).

WoF readings of trichotomy point towards the multi-dimensionality of redemption in general and with JDS in particular (see 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 as well as 1.2.2.2), which means WoF healing is also the vessel for carrying the movement's understanding and application of atonement theology. The atonement-provision paradigm therefore sits roughly at the centre of the system after the immaterial phase and within the material phase. The most prominent application of WoF's multi-dimensional atonement-provision narrative seen through the foundational trichotomy interpretative lens is that redemption from poverty as well as the blessing of prosperity is provided-for in the atonement and accessed via faith and positive confession/sensory denial (see 5.2, 5.2.1). With trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing and prosperity in place, redemption from spiritual death follows and ultimately evolves into the Jesus Died Spirituality doctrine (JDS – see 6.2, 6.2.1 and 6.2.2). Since they all express aspects of the atonement-provision motif, healing, prosperity and JDS can also be grouped

together into a third phase of the system after the immaterial and material phases before it – that of redemption narratives.

Chapter 4's theological analysis found that WoF's atonement-healing paradigm centres on the notion that healing is 'provided for' in the atonement. That combined with trichotomy opens the door for multi-dimensional healing 'provided for' vicariously by the substitutionary work of the atonement (see 4.2). Specifically, healing is understood as corresponding to the spirit, soul and body – something that makes atonement healing a central point in the emerging WoF theological system. Healing is central to the system because it is situated roughly at the mid-point after trichotomy, faith and positive confession; and because the provision of blessing via the vicarious suffering of the saviour becomes a second key interpretative lens after the initial interpretative lens of trichotomy at the entry point into the system. It also plays a crucial moderating role in the interpretation and application of subsequent features. While atonement healing provides the theological rationale for other material provision namely prosperity, on the other hand, prosperity is consequent to healing and not the other way around.

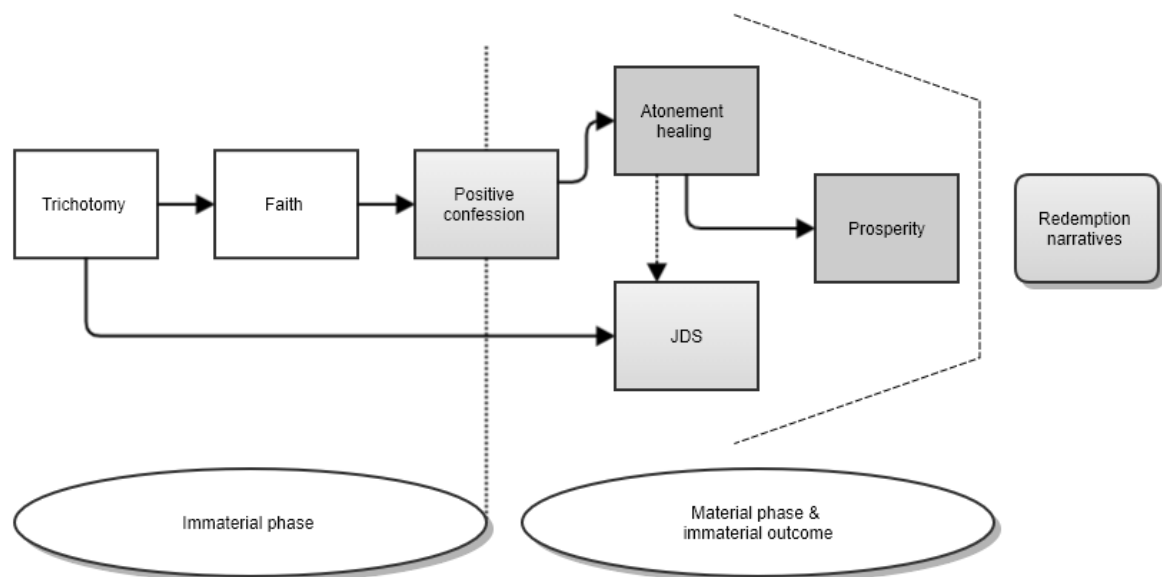
Indeed, I conclude that prosperity is a product of the preceding combination of trichotomy, faith, positive confession and healing and the theological context those features bring with them (see 5.2.2) because prosperity is reliant on the immaterial phase of the emerging system and because prosperity was added to the system's narrative subsequent to the other features.

Reading WoF through the prism of prosperity results in an undesirable over-emphasis on financial provision. Furthermore, all notions of prosperity engaged within WoF theology must be re-considered within the context of their reception. Disconnecting prosperity from the missional emphasis that was inherent in its roots, and specifically Swift's missional testimony risks prioritising the funding of goals other than gospel proclamation and

discipleship (see 5.2.2). Indeed, the restoration of the missional context found in Swift is key to counteracting WoF's tendency towards individualism, which comes as a result of rigid and hierarchical understandings of trichotomy combined with broader conceptions of personal salvation that flow from evangelical revivalism (see 5.2.3).

Overall, trichotomy, faith, positive confession, healing, prosperity and JDS are so interconnected, generally demonstrating reliance and subsequence in relation to one another, that they do indeed represent a system.

Figure 3 – The WoF theological system



Some might question whether the system necessarily functions in the order I have found. I arrived at my conclusion based on the historical, narrative and theological evolution of the six constituent features. So, while it is conceivable that they could be arranged in a different order, contextually that would contradict either the historical discovery and application of the features within WoF as mediated by Hagin; and that would overlook the theological dependencies unearthed by my research. Furthermore, restructuring the system in a different order is likely to result in different outcomes. In Chapter 5 (see 5.2.2) I found that placing prosperity preceding healing resulted in a more individualistic prosperity gospel more akin to

Stenhammar's suggestion of competing prosperity narrative than the other way around.

Similarly, the system could conceivably be de-systematised and broken down into any number of combinations of its constituent features. Indeed, some sources – as with *Stalker* and trichotomy – only really exhibit one feature. However, historically, *Stalker* is something of an isolated example. Sources exhibiting several of the features are much more common. For example, Irving, Dowie and Kenyon all show evidence of most of the features in the system. Not only do those cases represent historical examples of the combinations of the system's theological features, but – due to the theological dependence of the constituent points – it supports the case for a system. By comparison, *Stalker* apparently only espoused the system's entry point, which does not have the interconnected dependencies of the subsequent features.

Furthermore, on similar grounds to reordering the system, deconstructing the system means different theological and praxis-related outcomes are to be expected. Were portions of the system to be isolated from the rest, the constituent features and their cumulative sub-phases would still tend towards the six features in the order and combination I have discovered. In addition, the partial rejection of individual features is difficult for Pentecostals because each feature is in some way historically and theologically integrated with Pentecostal and pre-Pentecostal theology. As a result, we are inevitably left with some semblance of the system – which, as we have seen – tends towards the other features.

Nevertheless, as my research repeatedly identifies, there are problems across the system. Some readings of trichotomy lean towards Apollinarianism and hierarchy within the trichotomy (see 1.1.1 and 1.2.2.2). The subjective-genitive reading of Mark 11:22 at the heart of WoF's faith-of-God teaching is disputed (see 2.2.2). At times, the movement espouses teachings that reflect the adoption of a hermeneutical echo chamber that emphasises existing problems. The case of positive confession's "speaking spirits" teaching (see 3.2.1) and later

iterations of JDS (see 6) are examples. WoF healing teaching largely overlooks suffering and questions of theodicy (see 4.1.1). Meanwhile, de-contextualised prosperity tends towards individualism and materialism (see 5.2.3). And JDS compounds the pre-existing problems relating to trichotomy with further issues relating to atonement, Christology and the trinity (see 6.2.2).

However, the re-discovery of WoF's revival and missionary-focused contextual and theological roots combined with the system's emphasis on wholeness in spirit, soul and body provide hope that one answer is to modify and improve the theological understanding of the system's constituent features in order to improve the system rather than outright accepting or rejecting it.

To that end I suggest that two particular changes offer the most significant improvements:

First, trichotomy should be modified to understand the human spirit, soul and body as dimensions of a whole as opposed to over-prioritising the human spirit to the extent of establishing a hierarchy within the trichotomy. The language of triunity emphasises wholeness rather than trichotomy, which emphasises separateness. And since trichotomy is both the entry point and foundational interpretative lens for the system, replacing trichotomy with triunity will do much to address the system's most theologically problematic areas.³

And second, the WoF movement and those studying it should re-read the movement in light of the wider source base uncovered in my research. Specifically, Cornelia Nuzum, Swift, P. C. Nelson, John Alexander Dowie and Edward Irving should be considered as part of any WoF reception history. Reading faith and healing through the rest of Nuzum's writings, for example, results in a wider application of faith – associating faith with holiness

³ See Conclusion to 1, 3.2.1, Conclusion to 3, 4.2.4, 5.2.3, Conclusion to 5 and 6.2.4

and consecration as much as healing and provision – than is commonly associated with the WoF movement. Similarly, re-reading JDS through the dense and analytical writings of Irving does much to address the Christologically problematic areas of arguably WoF's most controversial doctrine. Both examples illustrate how the re-contextualisation of WoF teaching results in theological benefits.

In terms of impact, this thesis makes at least three significant contributions to the knowledge. First, by discovering previously unidentified sources of WoF theology. Taken together, those sources support an expanded history of the development of WoF doctrine and broaden existing narratives relating to the development of the movement's theology.

Second, building on the basis of my recontextualization work, I advance greater depth and precision of what particular WoF terms mean and how they function together as a theological system.

The result is that, third, the system provides a framework which can be utilised as an analytical tool within the methodologies of future theological research. For example, by advancing a framework, my research provides a means by which the theology of different movements and individuals can be identified as WoF. Having identified what WoF theology is, future research can then compare and contrast other examples with my articulation of the WoF system. Similarly, historical figures and their theology can be analysed in comparison with the system.

Since the language used to describe WoF theology up to now has often lacked precision, and given its apparent complexity, no further clarity is gained if WoF is simplistically defined as a prosperity gospel or a gospel of health and wealth, overlooking the other interrelated features. Furthermore, such simplistic terms as prosperity gospel fail to illuminate the theological structure underpinning WoF or explain how its theological features relate to one another. What the redemption narratives of the WoF system show is that we

should refer to the movement's theology in a way that reflects its integrated nature. Even the term Word of Faith does not necessarily demonstrate those points. Perhaps redemption-faith is a better summary.

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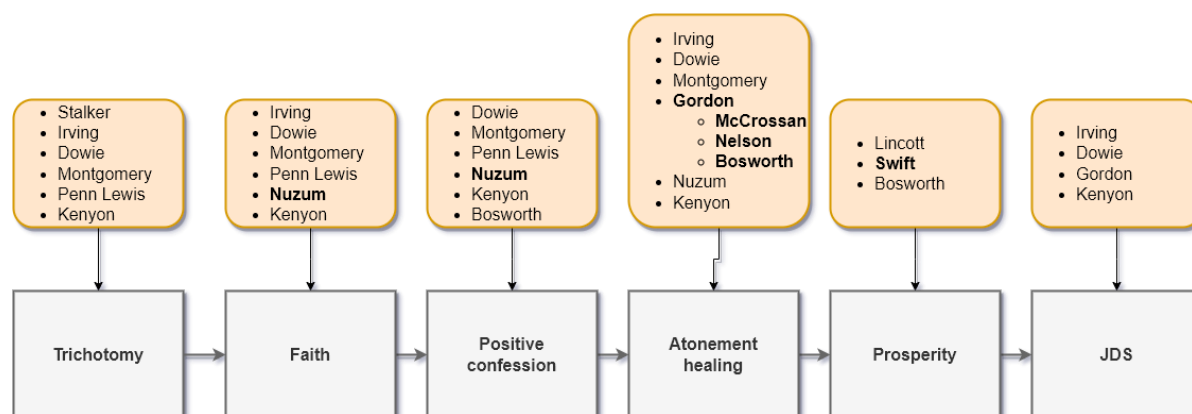
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Appendix 1: Key Word of Faith Sources



Appendix 2: Often Unattributed Sources of the Hagins' Teaching

Kenneth E. Hagin's teaching (date first published)	Source (date first published)	Corresponding theological feature
<i>The Believer's Authority</i> ⁴	<i>The Authority of the Believer</i> – John A MacMillan. ⁵	Faith
<i>Bodily Healing and the Atonement</i> ⁶	T. J. McCrossan – (influenced by A. J. Gordon's <i>Ministry of Healing</i> , whose work is also apparent in Bosworth and P. C. Nelson. See 4.1)	Primarily Healing, but also subsequent Prosperity and JDS due to its substitutionary emphasis
<i>The Name of Jesus</i> ⁷	<i>The Wonderful Name of Jesus</i> – E. W. Kenyon. ⁸	JDS, trichotomy
<i>The Woman Question</i>	<i>The Woman Question</i> – P. C. Nelson	Results from hierarchical readings of trichotomy.

⁴ Hagin, *The Believer's Authority*.

⁵ See also Billye Brim, *The Authority of the Believer & How to Use It* (Branson, Missouri: Billye Brim Ministries, 2016).

⁶ McCrossan, *Bodily Healing and the Atonement* (Hagin and Hicks).

⁷ Hagin, *The Name of Jesus*.

⁸ Kenyon, *The Wonderful Name of Jesus*. Along with many other examples of Hagin's unattributed use of Kenyon – see McConnell, *The Promise*.

<p><i>The Spirit Within & the Spirit Upon: The Holy Spirit's Twofold Work</i></p>	<p><i>The Spirit within and upon</i> – A. A. Swift (much of the first half of Hagin's book relies heavily on Swift, with several verbatim, unreferenced quotes. See 5.1.1).</p>	<p>Anthropology (and so indirectly trichotomy and JDS).</p>
<p><i>Redeemed From the Curse of Poverty, Sickness, and Spiritual Death</i></p>	<p>Hagin re-used Nelson and Swift in <i>The Woman Question</i> and <i>Spirit Within</i> respectively, while offering them little credit for the very apparent "help" with his writing. So, when Hagin says he wrote <i>Redeemed From the Curse of Poverty, Sickness, and Spiritual Death</i> "based in part on the excellent study notes he [A.A Swift] gave me [Hagin]" suggests those "notes on prosperity" are – as they were for <i>Woman Question</i> and <i>Spirit Within</i> – a significant source of the associated theological features.⁹</p>	<p>Prosperity, Healing and JDS</p>

⁹ Hagin, *Midas Touch*, 40.

Further examples:		
<p>Hagin explicitly recommended <i>Christ the Healer</i> by Bosworth but gave full credit (see 4.2.1). Bosworth uses and credits Kenyon for part of <i>Christ The Healer</i>, specifically the chapter on “Confession” (see 3.2.1).</p>		<p>Healing, Atonement, Positive confession</p>

Kenneth W. Hagin's teaching	Corresponding theological feature	Source
<i>Faith Worketh by Love</i> (See 2.1.2) ¹⁰	Faith	<i>The Life of Faith</i> – Cornelia Nuzum. ¹¹
<i>The Prison Door is Open</i>	Faith, Positive confession	<i>The opening of the Prison</i> – F. F. Bosworth. ¹²
<i>The Past Tense of God's Word</i>	Faith, Positive confession	<i>The Past Tenses of God's Word</i> – F. F. Bosworth. ¹³

¹⁰ Kenneth W. Hagin, *Faith Worketh by Love*, 1994, 18th printing ed. (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1979).

¹¹ Nuzum, *The Life of Faith*.

¹² Richmann, "Living in Bible Times: F.F. Bosworth and the Pentecostal Pursuit of the Supernatural," 391.

¹³ Ibid.