



# BREAK THE CHAIN OF WORRY



by  
*Kenneth  
Copeland*

Having recently ministered at Bishop David Oyedepo's great Faith Tabernacle Church in Canaanland, Nigeria, I'm still rejoicing over the thrill of seeing 91,000 people crowd into a 6:30 a.m. service in the middle of the pouring monsoon rains. With 54,000 in the building and 37,000 more in the overflow tents outside, it was an awesome sight—and that was just the first service. By the time everything was said and done that Sunday, 394,000 people had shown up for church.

At Faith Tabernacle those kinds of numbers aren't unusual,

either. The believers there are seriously hungry to hear The WORD of God. They're so full of expectancy, God is moving among them constantly in signs, wonders and miracles—adding to the church daily as He did in the book of Acts.

What opened the door for all this to happen out in the middle of a Nigerian jungle?

One man got a revelation of his covenant with God and dared to step out on it. One man put worry behind him once and for all, and simply trusted God to do what He said He would do. Talk about a marvelous example of faith! David Oyedepo has proven The WORD will work anywhere for anyone who will believe it.

For years, he's called Gloria and me "Mom and Dad," because right after he went into ministry he read two of our books. Somehow, he got hold of *God's Will Is Prosperity* and *The Laws of Prosperity* and The LORD used them mightily in his life. During our recent visit, he told me again how it happened.

"As a young minister I'd already come to understand The WORD of faith about healing and so forth, but I didn't yet understand the prosperity part. So I took my Bible and those two books and spent some time alone—fasting and seeking The LORD about it. As I was reading *God's Will Is Prosperity*, I realized that prosperity is a covenant. It's promised in The WORD, and since all God's promises are yes and amen through Jesus, it belongs to every believer."

For David Oyedepo, from that moment on the matter of finances was settled.

"I have a covenant with Jesus!" he explained. "It says, 'Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry...'" (Matthew 6:33-34, *New King James Version*). Once I truly

# GOD DOESN'T NEED THE EARTH'S ECONOMY TO GET THINGS DONE. HE HAS HIS OWN ECONOMY

**and it will prosper anyone who walks by faith in His WORD!**

understood that, I never worried about money again."

The results have been astounding. Right in the middle of one of the most financially poor places on earth, Jesus has added enough to Bishop Oyedepo's ministry to build—debt free, by faith, and without any American money—well over \$500 million worth of facilities, including not only a church but a major university. Literally hundreds of thousands of people are being taught The WORD of faith there. They're learning the laws of prosperity, putting them into action, and they're becoming what's being called "the new Nigerian middle class."

The initial 500 acres Bishop Oyedepo bought out in the bush country, which at the time was populated with nothing but a bunch of mostly unfriendly animals, has expanded to encompass more than 10,000 acres. Now called Canaanland, it's become a city. Thriving and prospering in the midst of a natural economy that's famous for poverty, it's a testimony to the fact that God doesn't need the earth's economy to get things done. He has His own economy and it will prosper anyone who walks by faith in His WORD!

## Worry Is No Laughing Matter

"Well, Brother Copeland," someone might say, "Bishop Oyedepo is an inspiring example, but I'm just not wired like he is. I couldn't say like he did that I'm never going to worry again. My parents worried; my grandparents worried; and I've always followed in

their footsteps. Sometimes I just laugh about it and say, 'What would we do without good, old worry?'"

You wouldn't be laughing if you knew what worry was doing to you. Worry is stealing from you the abundant life that belongs to you in Jesus. It's an absolutely deadly habit. It's also a sin. According to Romans 14:23, which was written to the early Church to address the question of eating meat that had been offered to idols: "He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Or, as *The Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*, translates it, "The man who has doubts (misgivings, and uneasy conscience) about eating, and then eats...stands condemned [before God], because he is not true to his convictions and he does not act from faith. For whatever does not originate and proceed from faith is sin [whatever is done without a conviction of its approval by God is sinful]."

Think about that. Whatever does not originate from faith is sin. That means all doubt, all unbelief and all worry is sin.

"What?! Are you saying I can't worry about anything at all?"

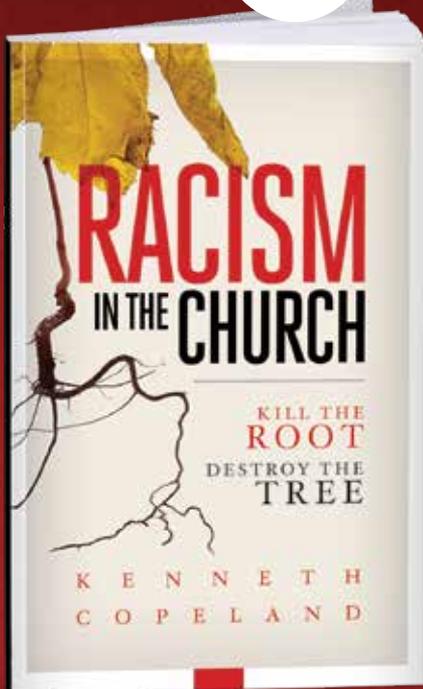
You can if you want to, but it's sin. Why? Because it's based on fear, and fear is of the devil. Just as faith comes from hearing and meditating on The WORD of God, fear comes from meditating on satan's lies. It walks hand in hand with unbelief and the Bible calls it *evil*.

I realize *evil* is a strong word, but I didn't come up with it. The Bible refers to it that way in the account about the

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10 spies Moses sent into the Promised Land. Numbers 14:37 says the report they brought back was an “evil report.” What made it evil? It was inspired by fear and not faith. Instead of assuring the Israelites the land was good and they could conquer it just like God said they would, the spies said, “Oh, the land is good all right, but it’s full of giants who are too big for us to fight. We’re like grasshoppers in their eyes!”

When you worry, you’re essentially taking that same attitude. You’re believing the devil’s evil report. Rather than standing in faith on God’s WORD, you’re giving in to unbelief and fear.

When it comes to operating by faith or fear, there is no in between. There is no neutral zone where we can just hang out and do our own thing. As human beings, we’re always agreeing with either God or the devil—and the one with whom we agree is going to determine the outcome of our situation. If we agree with God and His WORD, we’ll walk by faith, and whatever situation we’re facing will turn out good because God is out for our total, complete, supernatural health and wealth. If we agree with the devil, we’ll walk in fear and things will turn out badly because he’s the thief who’s come to “steal, and to kill, and to destroy” (John 10:10).

This is the reason it’s impossible to please God without faith (Hebrews 11:6). It’s not just because He’s hardheaded about it. It’s because He loves us, and faith is what connects us with Him and enables us to receive His BLESSINGS. Fear, on the other hand, disconnects us from Him and connects us to the devil.

What we know today as fear was originally Adam’s faith. A potent spiritual force, it came into manifestation on earth when Adam sinned and the forces in his spirit were perverted, or twisted opposite to the way God created them to be. (The word *wicked* actually means “twisted.” That’s why furniture that’s made from twisted wood is referred to as *wicker*.) The first thing fear did when it came on the scene was separate Adam from God. It caused

him to run and hide from God and His WORD in his time of trouble, instead of running to Him for help.

If the devil had gotten his way, that would have been the end of the story. Mankind would have remained eternally separated from God and we all would have been trapped in sin and fear forever. But God loved us too much to let that happen. So He put into effect the plan He had made before the foundation of the world. He went to work to abolish fear, save us from the curse, and restore to us His BLESSING.

He made a blood covenant with Abraham and promised, “If you’ll walk with Me by faith, I’ll BLESS you and your seed and make you a BLESSING to all the families of the earth. I’ll make you heir of the whole world” (see Genesis 12:2 and Romans 4:13). Then, as a result of what Jesus did through the cross and the resurrection, He extended that same covenant promise to all who believe on Him.

For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.... Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.... And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise (Romans 4:13, 16; Galatians 3:29).

#### A High Price to Pay

If you want to see clearly how evil fear and worry truly are, just put yourself in God’s place for a moment and consider what He did to set us free from them. Consider the price He paid to sever our connection with the devil and the curse, and to re-establish our covenant connection with Him and His BLESSING. He sacrificed His own Son. He laid the sin of all mankind upon Him and Jesus received it. He bore our sins in His own body on the

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tree, redeeming us from the curse: “for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Galatians 3:13).

Jesus actually went to hell for our sakes! He went there as our substitute and suffered the pangs of death “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Hebrews 2:14-15).

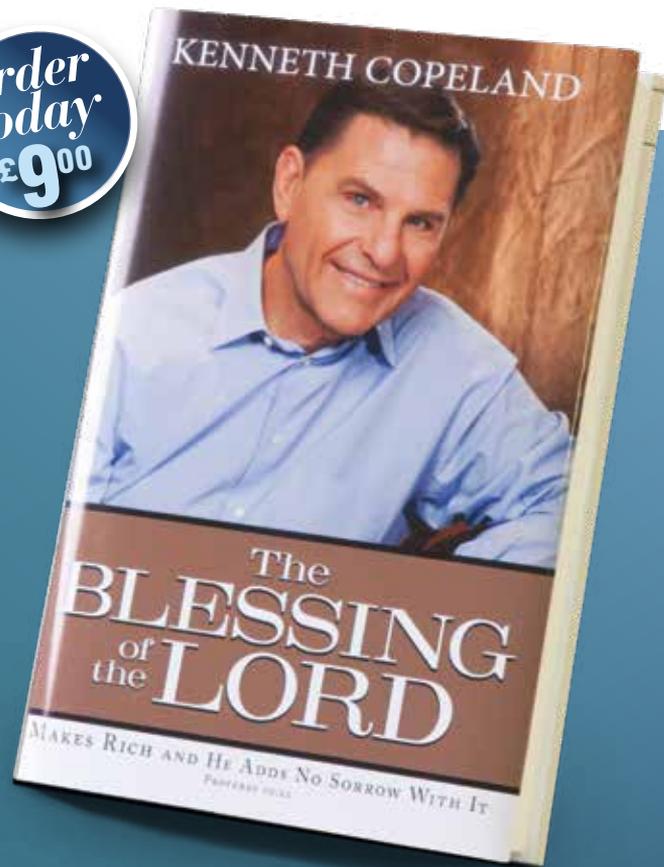
When you look at it in that light, you don't have to wonder why God calls fear “evil.” Wherever we allow it into our lives—whether in the area of relationships, finances or health—it makes Jesus' sacrifice of no effect in that area. It disconnects us from the immeasurably precious gift of God's grace.

I once asked The LORD to define the word *grace* for me. He said, *It's My overwhelming desire to treat you as if you'd never sinned.* When we choose to worry and doubt we frustrate that desire. Even though we're born again and headed for heaven, fear will cause us to think like sinners and cut ourselves off from the heavenly BLESSINGS God intends for us to enjoy here on earth.

That's why Jesus spoke so firmly to Jairus about it. Jairus was facing a life-or-death situation. He had only one daughter, about 12 years of age, and she lay dying (Luke 8:42). Believing Jesus could heal her, Jairus asked Him to come to his house and lay His hands on her. Jesus agreed, but on the way to the house, as a crowd of people pressed in around Him, He was delayed.

A woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone

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out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy

a messenger came from Jairus' house, saying to him, "Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master" (Luke 8:49). As a parent, I can't think of any words that would be harder to hear. For a father to get that news and still maintain control of his thinking would seem, in the natural anyway, completely impossible.

water? Just before he did that he was scared out of his wits. So were the other disciples who were with him in the boat. They not only had a stormy sea to deal with, as Matthew 14 tells it:

In the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come.

And when Peter was come

down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus (verses 25-29).

In that instance, the power of God's WORD not only destroyed Peter's fear, it carried him across water. Right out there in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, he walked on the word *come*, and never even got his feet wet. But then, he let his natural, carnal mind take over. He got his attention off The WORD, started worrying about the waves, and began to sink. He got into fear, it separated him from the power he was walking on, and he was immediately in trouble.

### **Fear Tolerated Is Faith Contaminated**

A number of years ago, right after the 9/11 attacks in New York City, God dealt with me about stripping fear from the Body of Christ. He made it part of my mandate and said to me in a way that still reverberates inside me, *Fear tolerated is faith contaminated!* As Peter learned out there on the Sea of Galilee, when fear is mixed with faith, faith stops working. Fear weakens it and contaminates it so that it can't get the job done.

# WHEN YOU WORRY, YOU'RE MINISTERING FEAR TO YOURSELF.

You're thinking about bad things and picturing them coming to pass in your life.

faith hath made thee whole; go in peace (verses 43-48).

The whole time all this was going on, Jairus was still standing there waiting... his daughter was still lying at home getting nearer to death...and satan, who was almost certainly using the delay as an opportunity to pressure Jairus to break his faith connection with Jesus, was probably whispering worrisome thoughts into his ear: *How long is this big-mouthed woman going to talk? Is she going to tell everything that's happened the whole 12 years she's been sick? Doesn't Jesus remember your daughter's at home dying?*

Jairus, however, apparently didn't give in to the pressure. He just kept quiet. The last thing he'd said to Jesus about his daughter was, "Come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live" (Mark 5:23), and he stayed with that confession. He listened to the woman's testimony about being healed of the issue of blood; he listened to what Jesus said to her; and since faith comes by hearing The WORD of God, his faith was strengthened and encouraged.

Then something happened he hadn't expected. While Jesus was speaking,

Yet that's what Jesus told Jairus to do. When He heard the little girl was dead, he answered by saying, "Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole" (verse 50). Sure enough, Jairus did it. He obeyed Jesus and refused to fear. As a result, a few verses later we see that his daughter was alive and well.

"Brother Copeland, I know that story is in the Bible, but I just don't understand it. How could anyone stop fear from overtaking him in a moment like that?"

The power to stop fear is in The WORD of God!

Apart from His WORD, no one can stop it. They might be able to manage it or push through it, but they won't be able to come up with the power to stop it completely. To connect with that kind of power you have to hear and put your faith in God's WORD.

That's what Jairus did. He heard the words of Jesus: "[Your daughter] shall be made whole," and he believed them. He shut fear down with faith in God, resisted the temptation to worry, and everything turned out all right.

You can see another example of this in the life of Peter.

Remember when he walked on the

That's the reason worry is such a bad habit. When you worry, you're ministering fear to yourself. You're thinking about bad things and picturing them coming to pass in your life. You're envisioning yourself losing your job, for instance, and running short of money. You're talking about it and making fear confessions: "I'm just worried to death about all these dumb decisions the government's making. They're messing up the economy so badly I'm afraid my company is going to go under and I'm going to end up unemployed."

No matter what the government is doing, you, as a believer, don't have any business saying such things! It's counterproductive. It doesn't proceed from faith and, as we've already seen, whatever doesn't proceed from faith is sin.

"But getting rid of worry altogether just isn't realistic!" someone might say. "It can't be done."

Yes, it can. Jairus proved it. If he could

refuse to worry in the midst of what he was facing, anyone can do it, anytime—including you and me.

"Jairus had an advantage, though, Brother Copeland. He was in the presence of Jesus."

Sure he was. But I know people who, because they're born again and filled with the Holy Spirit, have Jesus with them all the time and they've practically made worrying a career. So it's not just Jesus' presence that makes the difference. It's His WORD, and when it comes to worrying, He's said the same thing to every believer He said to Jairus.

"Fear not, only believe!"

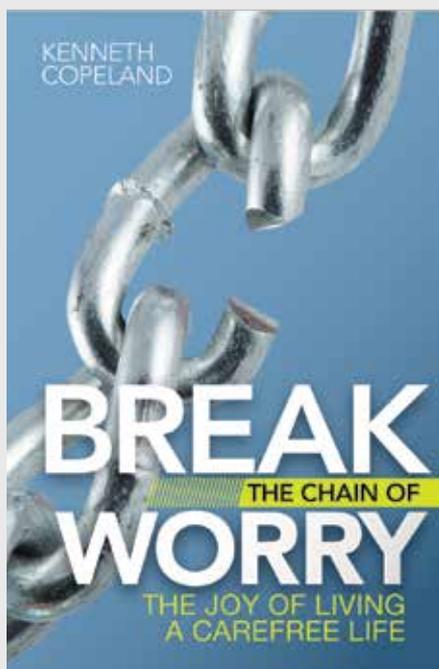
The fact that He commanded it means we can do it. If He commanded us to do something and left us without the ability to obey, it would be unjust. Therefore, anything He tells us to do He empowers us to do by giving us His WORD.

Look through the Bible and you'll see this is God's pattern: He always gives

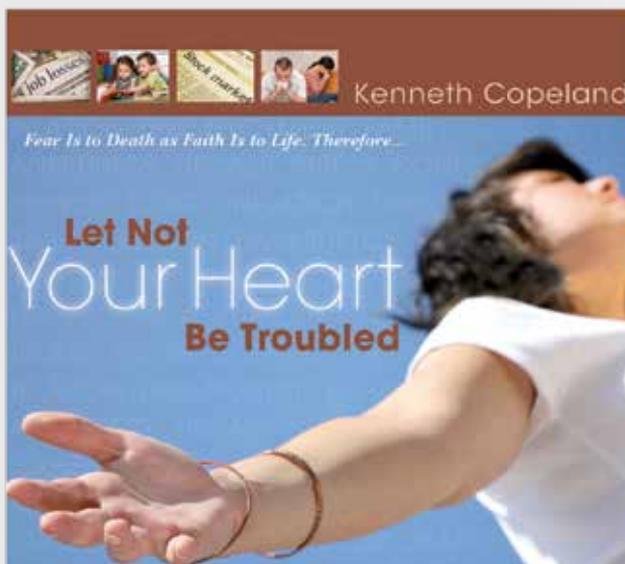
His WORD first, to bring faith, before He gives a command. Think again about how He dealt with David Oyedepo and you'll see what I mean. The first thing God did for him where prosperity was concerned was speak to him through the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Bishop Oyedepo received those words as a covenant promise, and they caused faith to arise in his heart. They empowered him to believe that everything he needed would be added to him. As a result, he was able to obey the command in verse 34, "Do not worry" (*NKJV*); and never worried about finances again. 📖

This article is an excerpt from the new minibook by Kenneth Copeland titled *Break the Chain of Worry—The Joy of Living a Carefree Life*.



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