VI. John A. MacMillan

The writings of Christian and Missionary Alliance minister John A. MacMillan (1873-1956), among which his book *The Authority of the Believer* was a key and very influential work, form an important link in the trajectory from Keswick theology and the

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1. See *The Authority of the Believer* (repub. 3 vol. in 1 of *The Authority of the Believer, The Authority of the Intercessor, & Encounter with Darkness*), John A. MacMillan. Camp Hill, PA: Wing Spread Publishers, 1981; orig. pub. 1932). MacMillan wrote the book after allegedly being involved in a healing miracle and a separate defeat of demons. First, demonically-induced heart problems from which a pastor’s wife was suffering were cured by the exercise of throne power (pgs. 117-118, *A Believer with Authority*, King). The woman “was receiving medical treatment” (pg. 117, ibid), but the problem was cured by miracle, Macmillan knew. It was not the medical treatment, but the exercise of throne power over the demons, that was truly effective. Secondly, a depressed lady was delivered from demonic depression when after “definitely asserting in prayer . . . the believer’s throne union” the lady “[look] audibly” by a sort of positive confession her place of authority, and then no longer was depressed (pgs. 122-123, ibid). MacMillan, who had been preaching the doctrines set out in his later book for quite some time already, went on to write an eight-part series of articles in *The Alliance Weekly* in early 1932 entitled “The Authority of the Believer” (“The Authority of the Believer,” *Alliance Weekly*, January 9, 16, 23, 30; February 6, 13, 20, 27, 1932). The articles, which were reprinted in booklet form in 1934, were commended in the preface to the 1933 printing (and subsequent printings) of *War on the Saints* by Jessie Penn-Lewis and Evan Roberts. The preface indicated that “The Alliance Weekly of America . . . [had] fe[lt] it necessary to publish some very able articles by . . . J. A. MacMillan dealing with demon possession” (cf. pgs. 123-124, *A Believer with Authority*, King). MacMillan wrote the additional material that made it into book form as *The Authority of the Intercessor and Encounter with Darkness* for the Alliance Weekly in 1936, 1940, and 1948 (John A. MacMillan, “The Authority of the Intercessor,” *Alliance Weekly*, May 1936, 334; “The Authority of the Rod,” May 18, 1940, 309-311, 314; “Modern Demon Possession,” July 24, 31, September 4, 11, 18, 1948), which were combined with material from MacMillan’s lecture notes at Nyack college to form the edition referenced at the beginning of this note.

MacMillan also edited for decades the continuationist periodical *The Full Gospel Adult Quarterly*, contributed regularly to and became the chief editorial writer for the CMA *Alliance Weekly*, and thus “his name . . . beca[me] well-known and established in CMA circles, and his teaching through writing . . . authoritative and popular” (pg. 127, ibid; cf. pgs. 129ff.). He also contributed to the *Alliance Weekly* by reprinting material from authors such as Andrew Murray, George H. Pember, Jessie Penn-Lewis, Charles Finney, A. B. Simpson, and others, and helped “shape the spiritual life of the Christian and Missionary Alliance for more than two decades” by his writings and editorial work (pg. 143, *A Believer with Authority*, King).

2. MacMillan’s influence has “powerfully shaped the theology and ministry of the CMA”: his book *The Authority of the Believer* has been “used on the mission field” in a variety of locations and “translated into several languages as well” (pgs. 203-207, *A Believer with Authority: The Life and Message of John A. MacMillan*, Paul L. King). The material in *The Authority of the Believer* was endorsed and quoted at length in the seventh and subsequent editions of *War on the Saints* by Jessie Penn-Lewis and Evan Roberts; *The Overcomer* magazine, founded by Penn-Lewis, published various articles by MacMillan; the “popular interdenominational evangelical newspaper *Herald of His Coming* . . . reprinted in full . . . The Authority of the Believer” (pgs. 208-209, ibid), while the Wesleyan holiness tradition was filled with MacMillan’s doctrine after Paul Billheimer, “Bible college president . . . radio preacher . . . [and] leading holiness proponent of the overcoming Christian life” (pg. 209, ibid) plagiarized *The Authority of the Believer* in a variety of his own influential works (cf. pg. 282, *A Believer with Authority*, King). Merrill Unger, graduate of the CMA training institute in Nyack, minister in Aimee Semple McPherson’s International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and professor at Dallas Seminary, spread MacMillan’s ideas in his books on demonology, which also influenced Unger’s colleague at Dallas Seminary, J. Dwight Pentecost. Wayne Grudem references MacMillan’s *The Authority of the Believer* in his systematic theology (cf. pgs. 203-214,
development of the theme of “throne life, which permeated the Keswick, Higher Life, and overcomer movements” as expounded especially by Jessie Penn-Lewis and A. B. Simpson, although with other earlier Higher Life antecedents, to both Pentecostalism and the Word-Faith movement. “MacMillan’s teaching on the authority of the believer is . . . [a] compilation and expansion of the teachings of . . . holiness leaders, especially A. B. Simpson, A. T. Pierson, Jessie Penn-Lewis, Andrew Murray, and George Watson.”

Paul King notes:

As a young man, John MacMillan would have had the opportunity to drink deeply of the preaching and teaching ministry of well-known [Keswick] leaders of his day . . . [such as] Andrew Murray and Presbyterian Keswick leader A. T. Pierson[. . .]. MacMillan was actively involved with Presbyterian churches advocating higher-life teaching . . . he had been immersed in teaching about the believer’s redemption rights taught by A. B. Simpson’ and others in the CMA and the

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3 Pg. 220, A Believer with Authority, King. See Throne Life of Victory, Jessie Penn-Lewis.

4 Thus, at “a China Inland Mission conference in 1897 Jessie Penn-Lewis taught on the believer’s position in Christ according to Ephesians 1 and 2” (pg. 218, A Believer with Authority, King; see the preface to The Warfare with Satan, Jessie Penn-Lewis) and how that position gave the believer “authority over all the power of the enemy . . . [and] power to deliver and loose others from the bonds of the evil one” (pg. 65, The Warfare with Satan, Jessie Penn-Lewis. (Dorset, England: Overcomer Literature Trust, 1963). See also Chapter 11, War on the Saints, Roberts & Penn-Lewis. Simpson also taught about “throne life” around 1897 in his Christ in the Bible Commentary, 5:413-414, affirming that the believer “takes the place of accomplished victory and conceded right,” until “all our enemies are made our footstool,” despite the fact that the subjection of all enemies under Christ as His footstool is an indication of His unique exaltation as the Divine Messiah, and despite the fact that such an image of enemies under a footstool is solely the perogative of Deity in Scripture (Psalm 99:5; 110:1; 132:7; Isaiah 66:1; Lamentations 2:1; Matthew 5:35; 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:43; Acts 2:35; 7:49; Hebrews 10:13), so that Christ is specifically contrasted with the created order by the fact that all enemies are going to be made His footstool (Hebrews 1:13). Simpson’s “throne life” doctrine thus takes from the Triune God and the incarnate Christ one of the privileges of Deity, and ascribes it to mortal men. “MacMillan’s book The Authority of the Believer is a more thorough exposition . . . expanding on the germinal thought of both Penn-Lewis and Simpson” (pg. 219, A Believer with Authority, King), and the Word of Faith movement proceeds to recognize the implications of the Throne Life with its doctrine that believers are “little gods.”

5 E. g., Asa Mahan, at the Oxford Convention, preached to those who had entered into the Higher Life: “[Y]ou share the same power before the throne which Christ has” (pg. 82, Account of the Union Meeting for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness, Held at Oxford, August 29 to September 7, 1874. Chicago: Revell, 1874).

6 In addition to the powerful Keswick influence that pervaded the CMA as A. B. Simpson’s denomination, MacMillan had a variety of other connections to Keswick; for instance, from his early days as a Christian publisher, he was “acquainted with . . . Dr. R. V. Bingham” (pg. 9, A Believer With Authority, Paul L. King, who “established . . . Canadian Keswick” (pg. 53, “Bingham, Rowland V.,” Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals, ed. T. Larsen), and read the periodical Bingham edited, The Evangelical Christian (see pg. 141, A Believer with Authority, King).

7 Pg. 238, A Believer with Authority, King.

8 MacMillan preached, in 1937 and 1941, at the Missionary Convention at the New York City Gospel Tabernacle founded by Simpson (pg. 161, A Believer with Authority, King).

9 “MacMillan’s concept of the believer’s authority was taught in germinal form by A. B. Simpson” (pg. 216, A Believer with Authority, King). See Simpson’s compositions “The Authority of Faith” (Alliance Weekly, April 23, 1938, 263); “Spiritual Talismans” (Alliance Weekly, June 14, 1919, 178-179),
Higher Life movement . . . [he] recommended Murray’s writings along with A. B. Simpson’s as ‘among the best’ . . . [and] published articles by Murray on healing[. . . One of the strongest spiritual influences on MacMillan’s life was Jessie Penn-Lewis, a leader in the British Keswick movement and subsequently the overcomer movement . . . who had influenced his theology and practice of spiritual authority. MacMillan, when associate editor of The Alliance Weekly, was “so impressed with . . . Penn-Lewis[’] . . . explanation of how to exercise the authority of binding and loosing [demons] . . . [in her] booklet entitled Prayer and Evangelism . . . that twice . . . (1937 and 1941) he reproduced a portion of this booklet as articles [in the paper]. . . . Binding and loosing, taught and practiced by A. B. Simpson, Jessie Penn-Lewis . . . and others, was practiced on the mission field” by MacMillan, who also read The Overcomer, the magazine founded by Penn-Lewis and Evan Roberts. Through Penn-Lewis’s influence “binding and loosing became a foundational understanding for . . . The Christian and Missionary Alliance.”

MacMillan taught that the Christian can “fearlessly bin[d] the forces of darkness in any part of the world” since “all the powers of the air . . . are in subjection to” him, and consequently, as a continuationist minister, he maintained a

and also Christ in the Bible, 4:338. Thus, each believer “speaks the word of authority and command, and puts [his] foot without fear upon the head of [his] conquered foes, [and] lo, their power is disarmed, and all the forces of the heavenly world are there to make the victory complete,” since, Simpson believed, the promise of Luke 10:19 is not just for the “seventy” (v. 17), as the context of Luke 10 would indicate, but for all believers (Alliance Weekly, April 23, 1938, 263).

MacMillan was “strongly influenced by Penn-Lewis” and even “made note . . . in his journal . . . [of] the death of Jessie Penn-Lewis in August 1927 . . . a strong indication of the extent of Penn-Lewis’ influence on his life and ministry” (pgs. 280, 89-90, A Believer with Authority, King).

Pgs. 14-15, 44, 124, A Believer with Authority, King. King notes the precursors to MacMillan’s teaching on throne power in the writings of Methodist holiness leader George B. Watson, as well as Penn-Lewis, and A. B. Simpson. He also notes that MacMillan “was also strongly influenced by the writings of . . . George Pember” (pg. 25, ibid.), as were Penn-Lewis and Watchman Nee.

This work of Penn-Lewis also “includes binding the strong man” (pg. 318, The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis, Jones).

For example, Andrew Murray believed that the “Church may . . . by the power of united prayer . . . bind and loose in heaven . . . [and] cast out . . . Satan” (pg. 62, Chapter 15, With Christ in the School of Prayer, Andrew Murray).

Pgs. 39, 65, 134, A Believer with Authority, King. Thus, for example, CMA “missionaries would claim land from demonic control in Tibet and bind the powers of darkness . . . MacMillan records in his journal that they were ‘binding here and loosing there,’” (pgs. 64-65, ibid), yet somehow the demons got unbound again and Tibet remained, and remains to this day, a stronghold of paganism, not of the CMA denomination.

Thus, MacMillan wrote that Christians can, “even today . . . according to the measure of their entire surrender . . . like Elijah . . . say: ‘There shall not . . . according to my word’ . . . [and] bind and loose in definite power” (pg. 65, A Believer with Authority, King).

Pg. 141, A Believer with Authority, King.

Pg. 135, Binding and Loosing, Foster & King.

“deliverance ministry . . . [and] frequently engaged in exorcism.”

He was also “acquainted with the . . . healing ministry of CMA evangelists F. F. and B. B. Bosworth . . . [who] revitalized the floundering CMA work [where MacMillan lived in] Toronto,” while also demonstrating “a fondness for Finney,” writing a preface to one of that perfectionist’s books that was republished by the CMA. In addition to accepting the practice of the sign gifts of modern tongues and healing and engaging in “power encounters” comparable to those of third-wave charismatics, MacMillan taught, with

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19 Pgs. 96-97, 173, A Believer with Authority, King.

The “Bosworth Brothers” held to the strange heresy that “healing is partaken of in the Eucharist, and that the failure to recognize at the Lord’s table that He atoned for sickness is responsible for the sickness and death of many” (pg. 22, The Bible and the Body, Bingham).

20 Pg. 40, A Believer with Authority, King. Bosworth may have revitalized a CMA work, but he did not heal, as he claimed to do, after the manner of Christ and the Apostles. One of Bosworth’s “best friends stated” that frequently “nothing moved” and nobody was healed at all, while on Bosworth’s very best nights of healing meetings “ten per cent of those that came for healing were ‘helped’”—note, not “healed” like those whom Christ and the Apostles cured, but “helped” in some unspecified way, while ninety per cent were not even “helped” (pg. 110, The Bible and the Body, Bingham). One of Bosworth’s co-workers, out of “hundreds and thousands that were anointed whose history of healing could be investigated,” could not “publish the account of a score of whom an unbiased Christian examination” would affirm that supernatural healing had taken place, and those employed by Bosworth in his “follow up” campaigns, examining those who were allegedly healed, found the results “utterly disappointing” (pg. 115, ibid.). Indeed, the “one who was mainly instrumental in [Bosworth’s] coming to Toronto was stricken before [Bosworth’s] meetings were over. Mr. Bosworth visited him and left him as sick as he found him” (pg. 115, ibid.). God could certainly have healed some people whom earnest Christians prayed for and who also attended Bosworth’s meetings, in the same manner that He answers the prayers for healing made by godly pastors and Christians in historic Baptist and cessationist churches that reject healing meetings, but Bosworth’s practice radically contradicted his claims to Apostolic healing gifts, and adulatory coverage by the Alliance Weekly claiming that Bosworth performed all sorts of miracles (cf. pg. 50, Alliance Weekly 59:3, July 19, 1924) is fulsome in light of the sober realities.

21 Pg. 132, A Believer with Authority, King.

22 E. g., even today “God still gives tongues to some” (pg. 6, The Adult Full Gospel Sunday School Quarterly, January 8, 1950; see also pgs. 254-255; 358-359, A Case Study of a Believer with Authority, Paul L. King. Pg. 235, Only Believe, King.

23 The charismatic “‘third wave’ . . . heralded by individuals like John Wimber (1931–1997) and Fuller Seminary professor C. Peter Wagner (b. 1930) . . . identified ‘the signs and wonders’ of the New Testament book of Acts as legitimate demonstrations of God’s power today. These signs were seen as authenticating Christ’s ambassadors. Hence, proponents speak of ‘power evangelism’ and ‘power encounters’ [in the] ‘Signs and Wonders’ movement” (Exploring Church History, J. P. Eckman. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1992). Wimber, who was ordained in 1970 by the California Society of Friends, that is, by the Quakers, and who “embraces the Roman Catholic teaching on the efficacy of relics” (pg. 172, Charismatic Chaos), has made statements that deny Christ’s omniscience (“There are many times in the Gospels when Jesus doesn’t know, and he has to ask questions,” Wimber, “Healing Seminar” tapes, 1981, cited on pg. 173, Charismatic Chaos) and affirms other blasphemies (for example, stating “I believe there were times when Jesus had little or no faith for the healing of the individual,” ibid). Consider an example of a “power encounter”:

According to John Wimber the first great “power encounter” took place at his church on Mother’s Day, 1979. A visiting speaker had been invited because Wimber sensed his congregation needed some refreshing by the Holy Spirit. Wimber was aghast and furious . . . when people began to fall to the floor and speak in tongues . . . The young people were shaking and falling over. People were weeping and wailing, and one young man had the mike next to his mouth as he spoke in tongues. Before long the floor looked like a battlefield scene—
Penn-Lewis and the modern charismatic movement, that believers can be demon possessed. Indeed, as Penn-Lewis affirmed that even consecrated believers can be possessed, so MacMillan affirmed that “[m]any earnest souls, who have been urged to entire surrender to God, open their beings with the utmost abandon to whatever spiritual power approached them . . . provid[ing] a channel for entrance of demons.”

Thus, MacMillan recounts the story of “a sincere Christian [he says] . . . [out of whom] eighteen separate demons left the body of their victim. . . . At intervals covering a period of two months [further] spirits . . . revealed themselves. . . . The trouble was . . . attended by a sexual mania . . . [finally MacMillan’s techniques had] perhaps thirty . . . demons . . . expelled.” MacMillan would ask the demons what their names were, then ask them if Jesus Christ came in the flesh, based on 1 John 4:1-3, and then command the evil spirits to leave when the demons said that Christ did not come in the flesh. Devils want to possess people, MacMillan affirmed, because “demons . . . are disembodied spirits” who would rather have a body, but “the [holy] angels are clothed with spiritual bodies similar to those which the saints shall have after the resurrection.”

It is noteworthy that MacMillan was not a Zionist; while he believed Israel had a future in the coming kingdom, he also wrote that, in the dispensation of grace, “the Jews have no right to Palestine by inheritance . . . and, since Calvary, the whole people are out of covenant with God,” and thus have no current claim on Canaan—on the contrary, “by all standards of international law . . . the Arabs are justified in their opposition to the possessing of the land by those whom they consider as aliens,” that is, by the Jews (“Stern Justice,” Alliance Weekly, July 23, 1938, 466). Nor was he a separatist, so “[t]oday he would be classified as an evangelical, because he did not advocate separatism, as many later fundamentalists did in opposition to evangelicals” (pg. 139, A Believer with Authority, King).

25 Pg. 112, The Authority of the Believer; cf. pg. 139.
26 Pgs. 89-92, The Authority of the Believer. This incident is described in detail and put in some context on pgs. 178-181 of A Believer with Authority, King; MacMillan testified: “The writer has seen as many as thirty demons cast out of a single person,” for “[o]ver . . . demons . . . the Lord exercised absolute authority, and His followers have the same authority through His name,” just as they also “see . . . today . . . healings that are as miraculous as any recorded in the Gospels” (pg. 18, The Full Gospel Sunday School Quarterly, February 6, 1949, MacMillan), the sign gifts of miraculous healing and exorcism being connected.
27 MacMillan’s exorcisms emphasized obtaining the specific names of the demons, so that “a trademark of MacMillan’s deliverance ministry . . . [involved] ask[ing] [the demon] ‘What is your name?’” (pg. 181, A Believer with Authority, King). Another “trademark in . . . MacMillan[’s] . . . deliverance ministry . . . [was using] 1 John 4:1-3” (pg. 247, ibid).
believers could with an “authoritative rebuke . . . as servants and fellow-servants of Christ . . . [make] Satan . . . always flee . . . [since] demon powers . . . all must yield to us as we take our place with Christ in the heavensies (Ephesians 2:4-6) and exercise the authority of His throne which He shares with His believing and obedient people.”

MacMillan explained what, in his view, provided Biblical support for his throne-power doctrine; explaining Ephesians 2:4-6, he wrote:

30 The verb *hath he quickened* . . . [in the first verse of Ephesians chapter 2 . . . is not in the original . . . the verb that controls this passage is seen in verses 19 and 20 of chapter 1, [thus meaning]: “According to that working of the strength of His might *when He raised HIM from the dead . . . and YOU when ye were dead.*” . . . The same verb [in Ephesians 1:20] which expresses the reviving of Christ expresses also the reviving of His people . . . the very act of God which raised the Lord from among the dead, raised also His body . . . the [universal, invisible] Church . . . [Therefore, the] “elevation of His people with [Christ] to the heavensies has no other meaning than that they are made sharers . . . of the authority which is His . . . they share His throne . . . [which] means without question to partake of the authority which it represents. Indeed, they have been thus elevated in the plan of God, for this very purpose, that they may even now exercise, to the extent of their spiritual apprehension, authority over the powers of the air and over the conditions which those powers have brought about on the earth.”

Consequently, the “completeness of His authority” has been given to believers so that they can exercise “this same authority . . . day by day.”

31 Despite the fact that the universal, invisible church has the same authority as Christ, “more manifest progress” has not come because “a head is wholly dependent upon its body for the carrying out of its plan,” and the universal church has not recognized MacMillan’s doctrine, hindering Christ from working through the universal church, on which He is allegedly “wholly dependent.” Spiritual work will go forward when believers, “immersed in the omnipotence of God,” in “humble faith . . . take [their] seat in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus . . . [and find that] all the powers of the air . . . are in subjection to [them] . . . [so that they can] fearlessly bin[d] the forces of darkness in any part of the world” and “reac[h] out strong hands to bind and to restrain all that is contrary to Him.”

32 God “share[s] with human hands the throttle of infinite power.” Moses held a rod when he led Israel through the Promised Land, and this “rod symbolizes the authority of God committed to human hands. By it the holder is made a co-ruler with his Lord, sharing His throne-power and reigning with Him.”

This truth about “the rod of the authority of the Lord against the unseen powers of darkness . . . directing the throne power of Christ

against Satan and his hosts” is confirmed by the Hebrew of Exodus 17:16, which is mistranslated and unclear in the Authorized Version so that MacMillan’s doctrine is not evident in the English, although it is in continuity with earlier Higher Life and Keswick proclamations. Believers must “abid[e] steadfastly by faith in this location” on Christ’s throne, or Satan can get them. Christians do “not have to fight against the foe but simply . . . hold over him an already accomplished triumph.” Without fighting the devil, but holding triumph over him, they can “bind the strong man,” Satan. Tyrannical governments can be made to allow missionaries into their nations when “in the Church believing groups . . . ‘agree’ that this state of affairs” will take place. Believers can “gain spiritual control . . . by . . . binding, by directed prayer, the powers of evil,” and, because of “Luke 10:17, 19 . . . [and] Mark 16:17 . . . he who believes and obeys [has] . . .

37 “MacMillan expanded upon the concept of throne life from Watson’s book *Bridehood Saints* . . . [and] [e]laborat[ed] on Watson’s application of Exodus 17” (pg. 122, *Only Believe*, Paul L. King). The book in question is *Bridehood Saints*, by George D. Watson. Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist, n. d. It is not certain where Mr. Watson got the concept from, as it is not contained in the text of Exodus 17. However, influence from Jessie Penn-Lewis’s *Hill-Top Prayer*, which is about the “power of the uplifted rod” (pg. 318, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis*, Jones), and Mrs. Penn-Lewis’s discussion in *War on the Saints* (“There are many aspects of the war by prayer against the powers of darkness . . . such as lessons from the act of Moses, lifting up his hands on the hill-top, which was an outward expression of a spiritual DEED,” etc., Chapter 11), is almost certain, and since Mrs. Penn-Lewis wrote *War on the Saints* out of her experiences with evil spirits, and her other inspired books came from the same source, MacMillan’s doctrine came from the fountain of revelation from evil spirits.


39 Compare the discussion of Boardman’s proof for the Faith Cure from Moses’ alleged rod-authority on pgs. 28, 49, *The Lord that Healeth Thee*, W. E. Boardman; at the Brighton Convention H. W. Webb-Peploe taught that “the uplifted hands of Moses” were “hands of authority and power; and thus victory was obtained over the Amalekites” in Exodus 17 (pg. 155, *Record of the Convention for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness Held at Brighton, May 29th to June 7th*, 1875. Brighton: W. J. Smith, 1875).


43 Pg. 42, *The Authority of the Believer*, MacMillan. Those with the power to change governments are “those, who know the experience of sitting in heavenly places with the risen Lord, to hold the rod of His authority over the blocked roads before His people that all hinderances may be removed . . . the rod . . . symbolizes . . . divine authority[,] not prayer” (pg. 290, “Go Forward!” John A. MacMillan, *Alliance Weekly*, 81:19, May 11, 1946). That is, MacMillan is not asserting that the people of God can pray and God can, in accordance with His sovereign will, then change what happens in government—a non-controversial assertion for all Bible-believing people—but that believers can exercise authority over governments themselves and change them by agreeing that such change will take place.

Similarly, Watchman Nee reported that some people in England controlled political change in this sort of way (pg. 76, *God’s Plan and the Overcomers*, Nee).
This ability to cast out devils will continue “throughout the age” until Christ returns.  

Although MacMillan affirms that believers have the same authority to cast out demons that the Lord Jesus has, and “all . . . demon powers . . . must yield to us,” nevertheless “there are frequent cases . . . of demon possession . . . [where it] has been found impossible to [cast out the demon], the spirit apparently paying no attention to the prayers or commands” of the Alliance minister or other wonder-worker. While the Lord Jesus always immediately cast out demons, when Alliance ministers sought to do so “the work of freeing the sufferer . . . [from] the possessing spirit . . . may be protracted” even when it does not entirely fail. For example, MacMillan in “his book Encounter with Darkness . . . describes in great detail an extensive ministry of deliverance over several weeks in 1947 . . . at one point continuing for seven consecutive nights. . . . On another occasion in 1951, a series of exorcism sessions on behalf of a Nyack student [MacMillan taught at the CMA Bible college in Nyack, New York] lasted at least three months and involved more than 170 demons.” In this latter episode, a “woman who was [MacMillan affirms] converted when nineteen years of age” but did not begin to “seriously follow the Lord . . . for a number of years; in fact, not until she had begun to attend a Bible school” began to be “seriously trouble[d] . . . [by] spirits . . . [a]fter . . . she . . . was baptized.” Exorcism “sessions lasted late into the night,” accompanied with “cries and wailing,” as “MacMillan . . . gave students on-the-job training in the ministry of deliverance . . . [and] taught students how to pray and plead the blood according to Revelation 12:11.” One exorcism session was “a struggle which lasted unbroken for

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44 Pgs. 120, 124, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
47 Pg. 148, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
48 Pg. 170, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
49 Pg. 148, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
51 This episode is detailed on see Chapter 7, “Modern Demon Possession,” on pgs. 145-146 of the combined edition of The Authority of the Believer, The Authority of the Intercessor, and Encounter with Darkness. Pgs. 182-183, A Believer with Authority, King, gives background.
52 Pgs. 184-185, A Believer with Authority, King. Revelation 12:11 has nothing to do with pleading Christ’s blood during exorcism sessions, any more than it does with pleading one’s testimony during exorcism sessions. It is another passage dangerously misused and misinterpreted by MacMillan. Compare the misuse of Revelation 12:11 earlier by Hannah W. Smith in a way that suits the Word of Faith idea of positive confession (Letter to a Friend, May 31, 1874 & Letter to Priscilla, January 14, 1882, reproduced in
eighteen hours . . . often artificial respiration had to be used . . . nurses feared for her life." MacMillan considered this a great spiritual victory, and he “learned more from this case than [from] any other . . . in the past,” thus making this event a key episode in the development of his spiritual warfare doctrine. Indeed, “as a result of the exorcism on the Nyack campus in 1951, MacMillan initiated a course in the next school year on demonology and spiritual warfare—possibly the first of its kind in Christian higher education,” although “[n]ot all students viewed this [1951 exorcism, this] . . . drawn-out deliverance . . . as a positive experience . . . [considering it, rather, as] a ruse of Satan.” For example, Albert Runge, an Alliance pastor who was student at Nyack at the time, wrote about this exorcism process that MacMillan found more helpful than any other, and which he made key to his system of demonology and throne-power:

[M]any exorcisms are far more detrimental than beneficial. . . . Many power confrontations between Christians and demons are actually engineered by the demons themselves. As a student in Bible college I was informed that a fellow student was demon possessed, and that there was an exorcism going on. Being of a curious nature, I went to see what was happening. . . . Climbing the stairs . . . I could hear an eerie scream echoing down the hall[]. . . . When I got there the exorcist [John MacMillan] was praising God for the deliverance of the victim. Just after he said Amen, a second demon made himself known. After some time of struggling, arguing and pleading the blood, that demon screamed his way out of the room. Everyone was relieved until another demon made himself known. This process seemed to go on endlessly for days, weeks and months with the same results. There is serious question in my mind that the victim was every completely delivered.

What went wrong? I have spent many years reflecting over that particular exorcism and researching God’s word, and I have become convinced that many exorcisms are power play setups by the demons themselves. . . . They choose an exorcist . . . [t]hey choose the timing as well as the audience. The whole process is under their control from the beginning to the end.

One of the things that happened during the exorcism convinced me this is true. When I arrived at the scene of the exorcism, I began to pray out loud for the deliverance of the woman. . . . Suddenly the demons cried out from the victim, “Stop him from praying, stop him from praying.”

entries for July 15 & November 7 of The Christian’s Secret of a Holy Life, Hannah W. Smith, ed. Dieter), and the similar abuse of the verse in Chapter 10 of War on the Saints, Jessie Penn-Lewis. Mrs. Penn-Lewis even notes “the strange fact which has perplexed so many, that abnormal experiences manifestly contrary to the character of God, have taken place when the person was earnestly repeating words about the ‘Blood’” (“Believe Not Every Spirit,” pg. 71, Overcomer 1912). Pleading the blood for the Higher Life, for post-conversion Spirit-baptism and the ability to speak in tongues, and for power over Satan, became a standard doctrine of Pentecostalism (cf. pgs. 3-6, Confidence: A Pentecostal Paper for Great Britain, 5 (August 15, 1908) and the Word of Faith movement.

54 Pgs. 183-188, A Believer with Authority, King.
55 Pg. 108, What Demons Can Do To Saints, Unger.
56 Pg. 192, A Believer with Authority, King.
57 Pg. 281, A Believer with Authority, King; see also “Exorcism: A Satanic Ploy?” Albert Runge. His Dominion, 14:4 (Summer 1987) 13-18.
The exorcist shouted to the students, “Stop him from praying.” The students around me told me to be quiet. I am convinced the demons were controlling the exorcist, a good man who lacked understanding of the confrontation. Another incident during that exorcism indicated that the demons were pulling the strings. A theological professor brought his agnostic daughter into the room so that she could see for herself that there was a supernatural realm. As a trained psychiatrist, she was convinced that we were all suffering some kind of mass delusion. While she was in the room the demons did not manifest themselves in any way no matter what the exorcist did to arouse them. However, as soon as she left, they acted up. I believe demons rarely manifest themselves in our culture unless they have a devious reason to do it.

What did the demons accomplish through this demonstration? They left future missionaries and pastors with a feeling of futility and helplessness before the power of the kingdom of darkness. Whatever demons say during an exorcism is completely unreliable. Therefore, holding a dialogue with them is not only unproductive, it is dangerous. The demons will attempt to intimidate, manipulate, disorientate and confuse the spectators of an exorcism to accomplish their own ends. All experience within the supernatural realm must be evaluated in light of the Scripture to avoid becoming excessively superstitious. There are no magical formulas, incantations, or rituals by which demons can be controlled or exorcised. Thinking back on my experience at Bible college, it became apparent to me that the person doing the exorcism had developed a systematic ritual to expel demons, and it had proven ineffective. First, when the demon manifested itself through the glassy eyes of its victim, the exorcist asked the question, “Did Jesus Christ come in the flesh?” When the spirit answered “No!” the exorcist declared it a demon. The exorcist later admitted to me privately that he was greatly confused, because at subsequent exorcism attempts, when the students were not present, the demons were saying that Jesus Christ did come in the flesh. What was happening? Once the demons had lost their audience of curious and confused theological students they had no need to carry on their charade.

Secondly, if the demon said, “no, Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh,” the exorcist would then proceed to ask the name of the demon. Interestingly, this procedure comes from an ancient pagan belief: The Sumerians and the Semites of Babylon laid great stress on the belief in the magical power of names. If a demon was to be expelled properly it was necessary for the exorcist priest to know its name and use it properly in a spell.

To make matters more confusing to the exorcist, the demons could call themselves Jesus and the Holy Spirit and then laugh. Asking the name of a demon serves only to open up dangerous and unnecessary dialogues with them. I have witnessed demons calling themselves by vicious names such as Hate, Fear, Murder, etc., that sent terror into the hearts of the spectators.

Thirdly, once the name of the demon was given, the exorcist would then command the demon in the name of Jesus Christ to leave the victim. A struggle ensued that seesawed back and forth. Finally there would be a scream. Then what appeared to be a moment of true victory was followed by the manifestation of another demon in the victim. It should have been obvious to us all that as long as one demon possessed the victim they all had access to her. The approach of casting out one demon at a time is futile. The demons rarely manifest themselves unless it is to their advantage. They prefer to work secretly behind the scenes.

Runge does not recognize that not only did the demons accomplish many immediate ends that advanced the kingdom of darkness, but that through this episode they influenced MacMillan and countless multitudes that have been influenced by him to adopt false doctrines in demonology. The main success of the demons in this episode was their effectiveness in spreading “doctrines of devils” to MacMillan and those who learned from him.


“Exorcism: A Satanic Ploy?” Albert Runge. His Dominion, 14:4 (Summer 1987) 13-18. While Runge makes many fine points, he still maintains significant errors. For example, he is in error in continuing to believe and practice the continuationism of the CMA. Furthermore, his affirmation that “we do not build our doctrinal understanding of demons from experience alone,” but from Scripture also (pg.
Despite the concerns of Runge and others like him, MacMillan was certain that he was truly exercising the supernatural gifts of the first century, that he was not deceived by Satan, and that deriving demonology from what the demons themselves taught and did in exorcism sessions was not “giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1). However, when MacMillan engaged in exorcisms, it “never seemed to be ‘quick and easy,’ for the demons would stubbornly refuse to cooperate and would hide over and over again. There were times in which he questioned why it took so long at times to see deliverance.”

For that matter, “[n]ot all of MacMillan’s endeavors in exorcism were successful,” but at times, despite his throne power doctrine, exorcism simply failed entirely. While MacMillan’s exorcisms were radically different, and far, far more protracted affairs, even when he was not simply a failure, than those of the Lord Jesus and the Apostles, and nothing in the Bible supports his practices, he nevertheless was convinced that they were evidence of the miraculous power of God through the believer’s exercise of throne power, not a deceit of Satan.

MacMillan was also certain that the true children of God could be possessed by demons. As for those who say that “a true child of God cannot be brought under the power of the enemy,” MacMillan follows Jessie Penn-Lewis and replies: “Experience disproves this,” for many minsters and workers in MacMillan’s denomination and others in Christiandom fall under Satan’s power and “never com[e] to the place of complete deliverance.” Not only can “doubts [be] injected into the mind by lying spirits,” but it is an “important fact . . . that believers may become possessed.”

14), is very dangerously insufficient—true demonology comes from Scripture alone, without any authoritative consideration of experience whatsoever. What is more, while critiquing MacMillan’s procedure of exorcism as unscriptural, Runge himself advocates a different procedure which is itself still unscriptural.

61 Pgs. 195-196, A Believer with Authority, King.
62 Pgs. 195-196, A Believer with Authority, King.
63 Pg. 127, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan. MacMillan’s argument from experience, not Scripture, mirrors Jessie Penn-Lewis’s argument in War on the Saints: “Evidences are now available, proving that . . . possession in its fullest degree, has taken place in believers . . . such cases having all the symptoms and manifestations described in the gospel records. . . . The fact of the demon possession of Christians destroys the theory that only . . . persons deep in sin, can be ‘possessed’ by evil spirits . . . the veil is being stripped off the eyes of the children of God by the hard path of experience” (Chapter 5). No Scripture is cited, or examples given from Scripture, of believers being possessed—rather, notwithstanding Biblical testimony to the contrary (1 John 4:4), “experience” and “evidences” outside of the Bible are sufficient to “destroy the theory” that Christians cannot be possessed. Penn-Lewis and MacMillan will not accept the evidence of God in Scripture, preferring the evidence they can obtain from the workings of demons.

64 Pg. 127, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
65 Pg. 117, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
although no Scripture whatsoever affirms such a doctrine; the experience of “actual cases of demon possession, where the evil spirits were in full control” prove that “sincere Christians” can be “possessed.”67 Devils can be defeated only by those “so few Christians . . . [who enter into] the victorious life of the ‘overcomer’ . . . Revelation 2-3 . . . [and by] an appropriation by faith . . . [bring Christ’s] ‘throne power’ into the earthly ministry of the believer.”68 Receiving a post-conversion Spirit baptism also helps, since by it comes “a supreme confidence in the wisdom and omnipotence of the Lord of the harvest, and an inward assurance of the sharing of His authority over all the power of the enemy.”69

Many of MacMillan’s teachings—and those of the Pentecostal and radical charismatic Word-Faith movement that adopted them—are unscriptural and dangerous. MacMillan gives no Scripture to prove that believers can be demon possessed, nor does he attempt to refute the verses employed by those who reject his position—he simply gives “experience” as evidence. Experience is the best argument he has, since Scripture states concerning all who are “of God” that “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4). The Holy Spirit is in the believer, and evil spirits are not—they are outside the believer in the world. This single sentence from the lips of the Almighty Jehovah has infinitely more doctrinal value than all of MacMillan’s experiences. Rather than concluding that true Christians can be demon possessed because, MacMillan affirms, various ministers and church members in his denomination have been possessed, from members of the CMA on world mission fields to students at CMA Bible colleges,70 he would have done well to consider whether demon possession in his denomination was a sign of its dangerous confusion about the work and power of the devil and evidence of the presence of large numbers of unregenerate church members and leaders, a product not only of CMA errors on demonology but of CMA confusion and weakness on the nature of the gospel itself, such as Arminianism,71 confusion on the nature of repentance,72 and acceptance of dangerously weak evangelistic methodology.73

67 Pg. 144ff., The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
69 “Love at Its Flood,” Alliance Weekly, December 11, 1943, 786. After all, “[i]t was thus with Dr. A. B. Simpson,” and the “Christian and Missionary Alliance looks back to him alone as its honored and God-directed founder” (ibid).
70 For example, MacMillan claimed to have cast out a demon that was speaking through a female college girl in a male voice at the Missionary Training Institute in Nyack, New York (pg. 97, A Believer with Authority, Paul King). Similarly, the wife of one of MacMillan’s coworkers “began suffering from strange hallucinations” and thought “herself to be lost” (pg. 97, ibid.).
71 For example, when MacMillan, in one of the college courses he taught, was asked, “‘What about eternal security?’ Answer was made: . . . [⋆]All of the divine promises are given to us in the way of faith
MacMillan also misinterprets and reads into too many of the passages of Scripture which he does not ignore. The reason that “there is very little grasp of [his doctrine] by the majority of even spiritual believers” is because it is not taught in the Bible. MacMillan never proves that fallen angels are disembodied but holy angels are embodied. He never proves that Satan or fallen angels have direct access to the mind and can directly inject thoughts into the regenerate—an affirmation that would be difficult to prove in light of the fact that only the Triune God can see the heart and mind and the entire absence of such an affirmation in Scripture. He never proves that believers need to adopt the pagan practice of asking demons what their names are as part of an exorcism process, or, for that matter, that believers should ever converse with demons at all. He

and obedience. If we go aside out of that way, there is no promise that applies to us...the only place of security is when walking in the way of holiness[?]** (pg. 25, The Adult Full Gospel Sunday School Quarterly, February 21, 1943; cf. pg. 156, A Believer with Authority, King), an Arminian response contrary to 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 and many other passages of Scripture.

For instance, contrary to Luke 13:3, on one occasion MacMillan was kneeling at an altar with a young farmer, attempting to lead him to salvation. The man bemoaned his condition, saying “I can’t repent.” MacMillan replied, “I am not asking you to repent; I want you to accept Jesus.” MacMillan stated that one first “accept[s] Him” and then later “comes to the place of real repentance.” (pg. 7, The Adult Full Gospel Sunday School Quarterly, January 8, 1950; cf. pgs. 162-163, A Believer with Authority, MacMillan); recounting that same story elsewhere, MacMillan used it to teach others in the Christian and Missionary Alliance to counsel people who say they cannot repent: “I am not asking you to repent; what you need is to wholeheartedly accept Christ,” for “repentance unto salvation...followed the acceptance of the Risen Lord, and the yielding of the heart to Him,” which, it seems, is somehow possible without repenting. At least MacMillan seems to believe that after one somehow accepts Christ without repenting one will end up repenting afterwards (“The Necessity of Repentance, Alliance Weekly, May 25, 1935, 322; cf. “Heart Trouble,” Alliance Weekly, July 20, 1946, 451, for another account of the same incident.).

For example, when “a man past middle age was brought into the evening service. At the close an invitation was given to come to the Saviour. The man indicated his desire for salvation, and [MacMillan] knelt beside him. The man was slow in perception, and it was hard for him to grasp simple truths. John 5:24 was [read, and]...[MacMillan] asked, ‘You have heard the Word of the Lord?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘And you believe on Him?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Now what have you received?’ He looked puzzled, and the verse was again read. Then the questions were repeated. Suddenly he cried...‘Why! I have eternal life!’ ‘Yes,’ [MacMillan] answer[ed].” (pg. 6 The Full Gospel Sunday School Quarterly, October 8, 1950) The fact that a man who was recognized as having difficulty understanding simple truths and who was slow in perception could answer “Yes” to two leading questions MacMillan asked him is not at all a good reason to give him assurance of salvation, and methodology of this nature is a recipe for filling congregations with unregenerate members who are able to be possessed by demons. MacMillan would have done well to study and recognize the error of Sandemanianism that still appears in various circles in Christiandom (cf. pgs. 170-190, The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors, D. M. Lloyd-Jones).
never explains why 1 John 4:1-3, which when interpreted grammatically and historically has nothing whatsoever to do with asking demons questions in an exorcism ceremony, should be used in such a fashion, and overlooks the fact that demons themselves had spread this misinterpretation of 1 John 4 to further their deception of men and advance their Satanic purposes. MacMillan never proves that believers “do not have to fight

Scripture that could be employed in an attempt to provide exegetical support for MacMillan’s practice of asking individual demons their names and then trying to cast them out one by one. However, the verse does not record Christ’s asking the name of evil spirits because He did not know who they were or because He needed to get their names in order to cast them out. On the contrary, in Mark 5:9 Christ asked the devils their name to get greater glory to Himself. Since the man in Mark’s Gospel was possessed by many devils, the Lord’s power was more greatly glorified when, by a single command, He cast out a “Legion” of devils, the number of which would have remained unknown to the people witnessing the event had Christ not required the devils reveal it. Neither Mark 5 nor the rest of the Bible provides a tittle of support for asking devils their names as a prerequisite in an exorcism procedure.

However, in contrast with Scripture, countless “magical papyri” evidence “that to know and declare the name of a . . . spirit was believed to give power over [it]” (pg. 228, The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text, R. T. France), and in “heathen nature-religions” exorcists “know the names of the demons in their native tongue” so that “by invoking these they cure the ailments” caused by the demons (pg. 152, A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, vol. 5, E. Schürer. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1890). Compare pgs. 759ff., The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Alfred Edersheim, vol. 2. 78

The pericope of 1 John 4:1-6 is about human false prophets who deny the true humanity of Christ under the influence of devils (cf. 2 John 7). It has nothing to do with seeking to ask devils questions directly. The devil’s work is done when Scripture is twisted and deceit about spiritual warfare is propogated. Perhaps MacMillan should have actually studied the passage before trying to use it in spiritual warfare—or if he did not think of doing that, he should have done so after he found that the devils would, at times, tell him during exorcism sessions that Christ did indeed come in the flesh (pg. 14, “Exorcism: A Satanic Ploy?” Albert Runge. His Dominion, 14:4 (Summer 1987) 13-18).

79 The first known historical use of 1 John 4:1-3 in this manner was by the demonically energized heretic Edward Irving, founder of the Catholic Apostolic Church, who predicted the end of the world in 1868 and affirmed that Christ had adopted man’s fallen nature. The Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals notes:

[B]elief in the [continuation of the sign] gifts was a natural consequence of his Christological views (to which the gifts testified): if Christ performed his miracles as a human anointed by the Holy Spirit, then believers might do likewise. In October 1831 the gifts were first manifested at a Sunday service in Irving’s church. . . . For six months during 1831 and 1832 the solicitor Robert Baxter . . . exercised an immense influence on Irving and his congregation as a prophet, before rejecting the manifestations. Irving remained convinced that Baxter’s gift had been genuine, and with his flock he continued to look for the fulfilment of his prophecies through the new movement, especially those concerning the raising up of apostles and prophets to lead the church. (pgs. 327-328, “Irving, Edward,” Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals, ed. T. Larsen)

Demons convinced Irving and his followers that the gifts that ceased in the first century had been restored.

Soon demon possession was taking place:

Palpable cases of [supernatural] . . . power . . . soon came to light, and were referred to Satanic agency. A very painful instance was the following:—A country clergyman had two twin children, who, whilst their father and mother were away from home, from some unexplained cause began to speak, as was supposed, in prophecy, though they were only seven years old. The parents, upon the receipt of the intelligence, immediately returned, and after observation became fully convinced that the Holy Spirit of God was speaking through their children. What they said at first “was of a very heavenly character.” But by degrees this wore off, and they gave utterance to many strange and extravagant orders, and at last forbade a marriage which was going to take place. This brought matters to a crisis, and the passage in the Bible occurred to the parents: “Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.” The father and his curate happened to discuss the mode of doing this in the presence of the children, when the boy cried out, “Ye may try the spirits in men, but ye may not try them in babes and sucklings.” This speech had the effect of postponing the trial
Thus, devils, who were obviously controlling the entire situation, deluded Irving and his followers into adopting a misinterpretation of 1 John 4:1-3 by apparently leaving the bodies of two unconverted children who had been possessed, in a manner similar to that in which the false doctrines of the Pharisees were advanced and many were deluded to their eternal damnation because devils allowed the sons of the Pharisees to exorcise them (Luke 11:19). By means of this delusion Satan led the Irvingites to misuse 1 John 4, believe that prophecy and exorcism were gifts for today, confirmed the Irvingites in their false religion, and spread Irvingite errors to other denominations and into Christiandom. This method of exorcism, adopted because of a rejection of sola Scriptura for what seems to “work” according to the demons themselves, was then passed down to Jessie Penn-Lewis, John MacMillan, and others.

Jessie Penn-Lewis picked up the 1 John 4:1-3 exorcism technique, reporting in The Overcomer (pg. 9, January, 1910) an instance of its use; a demon was “tested” in Germany, and “answered through a child of God . . . ‘Cursed, be Jesus Christ.’ ” (quoted by Panton, “Testing the Supernatural,” The Dawn: An Evangelical Magazine, May 15, 1925 p. 64). By answering in this manner, the demon was able to deceive many who would hear about the use of 1 John 4:1-3 as a test in Christiandom and spread the lie that believers can be possessed. Penn-Lewis also gave an example of the 1 John 4:1-3 technique receiving support from demons by printing an example of a 15 year old girl who was demon possessed but had the demon say, “Now I am found out,” when the technique was applied (“The Working of Evil Spirits in Christian Gatherings,” in War on the Saints, Penn-Lewis). It is consequently very probable that “the source of MacMillan’s use of the First John 4:1-3 methodology [was] Penn-Lewis’ influence” (pgs. 271-272, A Believer with Authority, King). The practice was likewise adopted and commended by partial-Rapturist D. M. Panton and the woman missionary Margaret E. Barber, who was sent out from Panton’s congregation and was a mentor to Watchman Nee (pg. 252, A Believer with Authority, King; Pg. 50, Against the Tide, Kinnear; when Nee traveled to England to attend the Keswick convention, “he sought out Margaret Barber’s friend . . . D. M. Panton, whose writings he had valued and . . . demonstrate[d] his appreciation,” pg. 153, Against the Tide, Kinnear). Panton taught:

[1] It is the direct command of God: “PROVE THE SPIRITS” (1 John 4:1): thus we have no option: no spirit-movement or spirit-action must ever be accepted without submission to, and authentication by, the Divine Tests. . . . ‘EVERY SPIRIT WHICH CONFESSETH THAT JESUS CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH IS OF GOD: AND EVERY SPIRIT WHICH CONFESSETH NOT JESUS CHRIST IS NOT OF GOD’ (1 John 4:2—[Panton quotes the corrupt critical Greek text]) . . . For an adequate use of the tests, it must be proved, by supernatural phenomena, that a spirit-being is present; he must, to be tested, so appear that he can be isolated, in conversation, spoken or written, from the human agent; it must be certain that he answers - not suddenly falling silent, or withdrawing, so leaving (possibly) a Christian to give the correct answer, nor any assumption of any kind be made, in confronting (as we do) the oldest and subtlest evil intelligences in the universe. I have myself discovered a demon by the test, and so I know that it works. . . . Tested, [a demon] may . . . answer[r] through a child of God . . . ‘Cursed, be Jesus Christ.’ ” [—The Overcomer, Jan., 1910]

In Irving’s day, a spirit challenged with: “Wilt thou not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh?” replied loudly, “I will not!” and after being expelled, says the narrator, it never returned. Miller’s
against the [Satanic] foe” because of the truth that Christ has already defeated Satan on the cross and will bring to pass the devil’s final and ultimate defeat in the eschaton. MacMillan’s drawing of conclusions about throne power against Satan and his hosts from the fact that Moses had a rod and from a Hebrew idiom about lifting the hand in Exodus 17:16 is severe eisegesis. He must affirm that Exodus 17:16 was not only poorly rendered in the Authorized Version but also misunderstood by all the Jewish Targumim, which support the KJV. The verse must also have been misunderstood and mistranslated by the LXX, the Vulgate, and all other ancient witnesses, not a one of which support MacMillan’s position. Nor do Revelation 2-3 identify as overcomers only those “so few Christians . . . [which enter into] the victorious life of the ‘overcomer.’” The chapters identify as overcomers all true believers, all who will “eat of the tree of life,” who will “not be hurt of the second death,” who will be “clothed in white raiment” and be found “in the book of life,” who are the sons of God (Revelation 21:7), and who are born of God and believe in Jesus Christ (1 John 5:4-5). The Lord Jesus Christ binds the strong man, Satan, by casting out devils (Matthew 12:28-29)—believers are never said to bind Satan or any other demons, and Satan will not be ultimately bound and his power removed from the earth until the Millennial kingdom (Revelation 20:1-3). Luke 10:17-19 refers specifically to “the seventy,” not to all believers living in the first century—the overwhelming majority of whom were not given supernatural powers to heal everyone

“Irvingism,” vol. 1, p. 94. . . . [A] Christian victim . . . [can be] fully under the influence of the spirit . . . The idea that no believer can experience the on-fall of an evil spirit is not only in itself deeply erroneous, and contrary to actual cases unnumbered[.] . . . [For example, a Christian woman was possessed, and when exorcism was attempted, the demon said] he did not intend to go, we had better depart. Then the spirit began threatening the sister in ‘Tongues.’ He was furious with her that she had betrayed him, and he threatened to destroy her. The more we prayed, the more he raged, and cursed and swore, and threatened us. I am not at all an emotional man, but I had the impression that the room was full of demons. The spirit flung the sister about the room, tore and bit her body in a fearful way; we ourselves heard the spirit cursing and swearing in ‘Tongues.’ The words used were so awful that I cannot write them down. I understood a good deal without the sister’s interpretation, for at times the spirit spoke in Latin, Italian, and some French. Unfortunately, I could only understand fragments without interpretation, as the spirit spoke very rapidly. . . . [But] an evil spirit . . . when confronted with this specific challenge [of 1 John 4:1-3] by the disciple of Christ, strategy or hate or Divine embargo compels a self-revelation. (pg. 64, “Testing the Supernatural,” by D. M. Panton. The Dawn: An Evangelical Magazine, May 15, 1925. Bold print, italics, and capitalization have been retained from the source document. Compare. pg. 9, The Overcomer, January 1910)

MacMillan had these antecedents in what demons convinced Irvingites, Jessie Penn-Lewis, and partial-Rapturists to believe, and the validation of how demons responded to eisegesis of 1 John 4:1-3 when they were done flinging around rooms alleged Christians whom they had possessed. However, MacMillan had no support from Scripture—and thus, in practice, he was repudiating sola Scriptura—when he adopted his three-step exorcism process of first asking the devil its name, then asking it if Jesus Christ came in the flesh, and then telling the demon to leave, exercising throne-power to make it happen, and hoping that it worked.

80 Compare also the oath as “lifting up the hand” in Genesis 14:22; Deuteronomy 32:40.
and cast out demons that the seventy received from Christ. Much less does Luke 10:17-19 refer to all believers today. Mark 16:17 demonstrates that certain believers would do miracles, but it does not promise that all church members or all believers would do all the signs listed in 16:17-18; the gift of tongues is mentioned in 16:17-18, but the Bible elsewhere specifically affirms that even before the sign gifts ceased (1 Corinthians 13:8-13) not everyone had the power to heal or speak in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:30). Nor does Mark 16:17 indicate that the signs would follow Christians until the return of Christ. Furthermore, ministers in MacMillan’s denomination do not actually have the power to perform miracles like Christ and the Apostles did. Christ told the seventy in Luke 10:17-19, “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you,” while Mark 16:17-18 states: “They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” However, neither Mr. MacMillan in particular, nor Christian and Missionary Alliance ministers and church members in general, can tread on or handle snakes with impunity, and they get hurt if they drink poison. They cannot do the kind of miracles that the Lord Jesus did when He was authenticating Himself as the Messiah (Luke 7:19-23) or the Apostles did in validating their office (2 Corinthians 12:12). Every single person on whom CMA ministers lay hands does not get healed, but perfect and certain healing was promised in the sign gift of Mark 16:18. CMA members get sick and die, but Christ promised the seventy during the mission of Luke 10:17-19 that “nothing shall by any means hurt you.” These facts devastate MacMillan’s demonology for adherents of Sola Scriptura.

MacMillan also held to the Faith Cure, Keswick, and Pentecostal doctrine of healing through the Higher Life of the body. That is, he taught that “divine healing [is] not a mere privilege but a command,” since Christ lives both the spiritual Higher Life of the believer for him and lives the bodily life of the believer also. Christians “should claim this gracious relationship . . . [of being] members of [Christ’s] body [in the universal, invisible church, as allegedly taught in Ephesians 5:30] for their own flesh and bones, and refuse the sicknesses that seek to fasten upon their physical frames,” and

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82 Luke 10:17-19 clearly establishes that exorcism is a sign gift; the Lord Jesus gave the seventy power to cast out demons which they did not possess before that time and which distinguished them from the rest of God’s people, who were not given supernatural ability to exorcise.

83 Pg. 26, The Adult Full Gospel Sunday School Quarterly, January 23, 1938. MacMillan taught that “healing . . . is . . . His will . . . unless there is something between . . . [the believer] and Him, and that if such an obstacle exists, it may be removed,” so healing is to be expected whenever one is right with God (pg. 162 of A Believer with Authority, King).

84 Pg. 25, The Adult Full Gospel Sunday School Quarterly, November 22, 1942.
thus, by refusing to be sick, not get sick. As “the Atonement has made healing by divine power one of the abiding privileges of the redeemed,” MacMillan discovered and “shared with his students . . . [at the] Missionary Training Institute . . . one of his secrets” of receiving healing and maintaining health[,] [namely, to] daily . . . lay hands on various parts of his body, praying for divine healing and health in each part.” Nonetheless, MacMillan had to “battle[e] physical illness,” which, indeed, “frequently and severely plagued him in China” on the mission field. “After visiting a colony of lepers” in China, MacMillan restated his belief that “healing power should not pass away, but rather that greater [healing] power should be manifest because [Christ] had ascended,” yet he had to admit, “[w]e do not see it.” Not a single leper was healed, the exact opposite effect of Christ’s genuine miraculous power which “healed all.” During a cholera epidemic, MacMillan and other CMA missionaries “claimed Psalm 91:3” for victory over “sickness and depression,” which were “satanic oppression requiring warfare,” but, nonetheless, “they endured . . . oppression of body and depression of mind.” MacMillan, his wife, and their son “were all prostrated by a serious influenza.” MacMillan had to endure the “slow and painful death . . . [of] his sister Lid[e].” Isabel MacMillan, his wife and co-preacher, suffered from tragic illnesses:

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85 Since nothing in the Bible says anything about MacMillan’s practice, it would certainly be a secret to those who consider God’s Word their sole authority on the doctrine of Divine healing.
86 Pgs. 89, 161, A Believer with Authority, King.
87 Pg. 43, A Believer with Authority, King.
88 Pg. 89, A Believer with Authority, King.
89 John 14:12 does not teach that greater healing power than Christ’s would be exercised throughout the dispensation of grace. David Cloud explains:

[The verse] cannot mean that believers through the centuries would be able to do greater sign miracles than Jesus. That would be impossible. What could be greater than turning water into wine, feeding multitudes, walking on the water, and raising the dead? Jesus did not say that the disciples would do greater miracles; He said they would do greater works. Though the word “works” [πράγματα] is sometimes used to describe Jesus’ miracles, it is not limited to that. Whereas Jesus ministered only in Palestine and saw only a relatively few souls saved under His direct ministry, His disciples have ministered throughout the world and have seen multitudes of souls saved. Whereas Jesus wrote no books, the apostles completed the canon of Scripture. God’s people have enjoyed the power to live holy lives in the face of a godless generation, to withstand the most searing persecution, and to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth. God’s people have continued to experience miracles and have done great works, but they have not done the Messianic sign miracles [after the sign gifts ceased with the completion of the canon and the passing of the Apostles.] (Pg. 107, “Charismatic Movement,” Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible and Christianity, David Cloud. Elec. acc. Fundamental Baptist CD-ROM Library)

90 Pgs. 56-57, A Believer with Authority, King.
92 Pg. 63, A Believer with Authority, King.
93 Pg. 100, A Believer with Authority, King.
94 Pg. 88, A Believer with Authority, King.
95 Thus, Isabel “assisted in the [church] services, sometimes preaching when John was ministering elsewhere” (pg. 75, A Believer with Authority, King), since “John believed that a woman could be called to
She contracted Dengue fever and malaria in 1926 and never fully recovered. It left her in a weakened condition and susceptible to other diseases. In the last year of Isabel’s life, she suffered the symptoms of appendicitis—an unusual skin problem that developed into an abscess on her leg—boils—a painful carbuncle on her face—flu—irregular and rapid heartbeat—intense headaches—nausea—weakness—to undergo surgery—until finally she became comatose and died.

During this painful time, MacMillan “prayed much for Divine intervention” . . . concluded that ‘What the Father is doing, I do’ . . . and wrote, ‘I am further sure that the condition of my wife is a manifestation of demoniacal power’ . . . an ‘infernal fiat’ . . . because they were dislodging the spirits that held the territories of the Philippines in darkness.” Despite all night prayer vigils for her at the local CMA Bible college, Isabel’s pleading with her husband that “unless [he] broke the chains of Satan she would not last long,” and MacMillan’s regular and repeated exercise of his doctrine of throne-power over all evil spirits, his wife was not healed and the spirits allegedly causing the disease were not defeated, but she suffered a sad, drawn out, and painful sickness and death. MacMillan himself was not healed, but died from “cancer preach or prophesy” (pg. 270, *ibid*.), for, in Mr. MacMillan’s view, “1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 . . . was a Jewish ordinance,” and the quotation of Joel 2:28-32 in Acts 2 validated women preachers (pg. 251, “Inquirer’s Corner,” *Alliance Weekly*, 70:16, April 20, 1935), as it had to Jessie Penn-Lewis.

97 Pgs. 99-105, 112, *A Believer with Authority*, King. Dr. King affirms that MacMillan anticipated the charismatic concept of “territorial spirits.” He also affirmed that MacMillan “could have been a forerunner of the contemporary [charismatic] concepts of spiritual mapping and breaking the strongholds of territorial spirits . . . [through] such concepts as ‘praying geographically’” (pg. 140, *A Believer with Authority*, King; citing “Praying Geographically,” *Alliance Weekly*, September 14, 1946, 579). MacMillan did indeed write: “[E]very [pagan, demonic] god is confined to definite territorial limits, outside of which his influence does not extend” (“Our Most Stubborn Foe,” *Alliance Weekly*, June 27, 1942, 402); however, he was talking only of the non-monotheistic ancient pagan religions, and in this particular passage he does not make it absolutely clear that he accepted their view of their deities—he contrasted this view with that of Islam, which he considered equally Satanic, but not confined to national or territorial boundaries. Furthermore, the reference to MacMillan’s article “Praying Geographically” is not absolutely clear. It is very possible that Dr. King is correct about MacMillan, but the support King provides is not definitive. In any case, it is apparent that Jessie Penn-Lewis had affirmed some years earlier, in 1897 at a China Inland Mission conference, that Daniel 10 evidenced that specific devils rule various territories (see pg. 20, *The Warfare with Satan*, Penn-Lewis), and she employed the related tool of “warfare prayer” to oppose these territorial spirits, spreading the warfare prayer doctrine through conventions for Keswick and Overcomer theology (pgs. 279-281, *Mrs. Penn-Lewis: A Memoir*, Mary N. Garrard). In light of her profound influence upon his thought in other areas, it is very likely that MacMillan adopted her doctrine, even if Paul King’s biography of MacMillan does not supply conclusive evidence.


98 Pg. 103, *A Believer with Authority*, King.
99 Such an event would be difficult enough to deal with for one who held to a Scriptural view of healing: for one with MacMillan’s doctrine, it would be much worse.
of the spine” after a significant period of “constant pain.” MacMillan also admits that “there are frequent cases . . . of demon possession” where CMA ministers find it “impossible” to cast out demons. MacMillan’s missionary ministry included many such failures, such as “a boy in the [CMA] school [who] manifested signs of demonization” yet for some time “defied deliverance,” or a woman who MacMillan and others “were not able to set . . . free.”

Luke 10:17-19 and Mark 16:17-18 leave no room for such abject failures to heal and cast out devils. It is an abuse of Scripture to take passages that do not refer to all believers today and read into them what they do not promise. What is more, when CMA members claim they can work apostolic sign miracles but are then unable to do what God never promised, His holy name is blasphemed by those who do not recognize the CMA’s abuse of the Bible and consequently conclude that God can fail to keep His promises.

David Cloud effectively refutes MacMillan’s doctrine of the continuation of signs gifts and miracles throughout the church age:

The gift of healing was associated with the apostolic age, and God gave the apostles sign gifts to authenticate their calling (2 Cor. 12:12). See Mark 3:14-15; Acts 2:33; 4:33; 5:12, 15; 19:12. The apostles laid the foundation for the church (Eph. 2:20), and when they died their sign gifts ceased. If the sign miracles were operative throughout the church age, they could not have been effective as apostolic sign gifts. Even in the early churches, all Christians could not do the sign miracles of the apostles. The only exceptions were a few men upon whom the apostles had laid hands. There was no general miracle-working experience among the first churches. If there had been, Paul could not have pointed to his miracle-working ability as a special sign. His would have been just another miracle-working Christian ministry if all could have performed such things; but all could not. If all could have performed miracles as a matter of course, the Christians would not have called for Peter to come and raise Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36-42). Peter’s miracle that day was the “sign of an apostle.” . . . God does not always heal sicknesses. Timothy was not healed supernaturally of his often infirmities (1 Tim. 5:23). Trophimus was not healed when he was sick in Miletum (2 Tim. 4:20). Paul was not healed of the sickness described in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

The Greek word for “infirmities” (2 Cor. 12:10) is elsewhere translated “sickness” (Jn. 11:4) and “disease” (Acts 28:9; 1 Tim. 6:20). Three times Paul asked God to take away this affliction, but the Bible says He refused to do so. Paul was told that this infirmity was something God wanted him to have for his spiritual well-being. Upon learning this, Paul surrendered to God’s will and

Much sickness of other sorts remained unhealed around MacMillan; for example, a student at Nyack college who had polio lived in the MacMillan home for four years, but remained unhealed (pg. 148, A Believer with Authority, King).

Compare Pentecostal historian Donald Gee’s downgrade of Biblical healings and miracles to explain away the utter failure of Pentecostal healers to heal everyone: “A sadder criticism may reflect upon the small number of definite miracles of healing compared to the great numbers who were prayed for . . . in the [healing] campaigns. . . . It is foolish to ignore the facts. Various answers may be suggested . . . the Bible makes it clear to the candid reader that, generally speaking, many were still left sick even after great displays of healing power . . . [by] our Lord” (pgs. 148-149, The Pentecostal Movement, Donald Gee). Pentecostal healers cannot heal everyone—so the Lord Jesus Christ’s healing ability is blasphemously downgraded.
MacMillan would have done well to embrace historic Baptist cessationism and reject as dangerous and unscriptural the Keswick doctrine that the sign gifts continue throughout the church age.

MacMillan also misinterprets Ephesians 1-2, the central passage for his throne-power concept that allegedly establishes his doctrine that Christians have all of Christ’s authority over evil spirits. His conclusions about Ephesians 1:19-20; 2:1 are erroneous. It is obvious that the “hath he quickened” in the Authorized Version of Ephesians 2:1 is properly supplied from the “quickened us together” in 2:5, as the parallelism and the continuity of 2:1-7 makes clear. Nothing is supplied in 2:1 because of a “verb” that is “seen in verses 19 and 20 [of chapter 1] . . . which expresses the reviving of Christ,” even apart from the fact that Ephesians 1:19 and 1:20 do not even share a verb, and the word rendered “raised” in v. 20 is not a verb but a participle, a verbal adjective, with no related grammatical form in v. 19. In fact, Ephesians chapter two begins a new section of Paul’s epistle. Furthermore, Ephesians never states that believers can

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105 Καὶ ὑμᾶς ὑμὸς νεκροὶς τοῖς παραπτώμασι, v. 1; καὶ ὑμὸς ὑμὸς νεκροὶς τοῖς παραπτώμασι συνεξωσούμεσθε, v. 5. The main verbs of the sentence of 2:1-7 are found in v. 5-6, and v. 1 looks forward to this subsequent portion of the sentence.

106 Pgs. 7-9, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.

107 ἐγείρας.

108 It is possible that MacMillan’s linguistic and exegetical errors are a product, in part, of the fact that he “never formally completed high school or attended college” (pg. 8, A Believer With Authority, Paul L. King), and his “self-instruction” to compensate for his “limited education” (pg. 8, ibid) may have been not a little less then what it ought to have been. Nevertheless, while “today his lack of formal education would disqualify him from most academic teaching . . . MacMillan taught classes at the Missionary Training Institute at Nyack . . for nineteen years, from 1934 to 1953” (pg. 151, A Believer with Authority), and he also taught at CMA institutions on foreign mission fields. His book “The Authority of the Believer was a required textbook in MacMillan’s ‘Principles of Missions’ course, which included training in exercising spiritual authority and casting out demons. In on-the-job training, he had students assist him in exorcisms,” by, for example, delivering classmates who were “demonically afflicted” in the college during a period of revivalism there (pg. 154, A Believer with Authority, King) as described by Runge above (“Exorcism: A Satanic Ploy?” Albert Runge. His Dominion, 14:4 (Summer 1987) 13-18). Since all believers, even in the first century, never had the miraculous ability to cast out demons, and the Bible records no examples of training anyone in exorcism methodology, on-the-job training was important, since MacMillan’s doctrine was impossible to derive from Scripture alone.

109 The fact that Ephesians 2:1 begins with καὶ does not establish that chapter two is continuing a series from Ephesians 1:20-23 that is controlled by the ἐνθηρήσεν . . . καὶ ἐκκάθισεν in 1:20, continued into 1:22 with the καὶ . . . καὶ, and then continued into chapter two with the καὶ of 2:1 and 2:5. First, the
“exercise the authority of [Christ’s] throne” or that God “share[s] with human hands the throttle of infinite power.” Paul taught the members of the church at Ephesus that they were “in heavenly places” by virtue of their union with Christ. God dwells “in heavenly places” (1:3), Christ ascended to such heavenly places (1:20), and believers are, because of the marvelous grace and love of God, in union with Christ in them (1:20). However, MacMillan makes the dangerous error of equating the functions of being “at the right hand” of God and being “in heavenly places.” The former is a symbol of sovereignty (cf. Psalm 110:1) and is affirmed of Christ only, while the latter phrase is employed, not for believers only (Ephesians 2:6), but even for Satanic forces (6:12). Satan’s hosts are in the heavenlies, but they are certainly not at the right hand of God—that position is reserved only for Christ. If “in the heavenlies” proves that believers are at the right hand of God, in the position reserved only for the Messiah, the God-Man and Head of His mediatorial kingdom, then Satan’s forces are there, too, and they also can exercise all of God’s authority. Their longed-for goal of usurping God’s unique authority (cf. Isaiah 14; Genesis 3:5) would in such a situation have been achieved. Believers “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (2:6) because they are in union with that Christ who sits at the Father’s right hand, with all things under His feet, but Ephesians never states that they are themselves at the right hand of God and exercising Christ’s authority. Not only does Paul never make such a statement, but this idea would change relevant uses of καὶ in 1:20-23 are followed by a main verb (καὶ ἐκάθισεν . . . καὶ . . . ὑπέταξεν . . . καὶ . . . ἐδοκεῖ) while the new section in 2:1 has an entirely different structure; the καὶ followed by a pronoun, participle, adjective, (articular) noun, and then another καὶ followed by another articular noun is not at all the same as the structure of 1:20-23 or a continuation of that sentence. Rather, 1:23 is the end of its own sentence, and the καὶ of 2:1 transitions to a new section of the epistle, which, while it certainly builds upon the glorious truths of chapter one, proves nothing at all like what MacMillan and the charismatic and Word-Faith heretics that follow him allege. “It would be inappropriate to conclude that 2:1-10 is simply a continuation of 1:20-23. Verse 23 forms a natural conclusion to 1:20-23 and the parallels are insufficient to justify a one-to-one application of the truths mentioned in 1:20-23” (pg. 104, “Exaltation and Solidarity with Christ: Ephesians 1:20 and 2:6,” Thomas G. Allen. Journal for the Study of the New Testament 28 (1986) 103-120).

110 Pg. 99, Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
111 Pg. 47, Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
112 The phrase ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις is unique to Ephesians, appearing in 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12.
113 While Revelation 3:21 might be (inappropriately) advanced as a support for confusing Christ’s sovereign rule with the rule of believers, the verse cannot possibly provide support for MacMillan’s position, as the rule promised is specifically said to not take place during the Christian’s lifetime, but after the return of Christ and the establishment of the Millennial kingdom. The rule mentioned in Revelation 3:21 relates to believers holding various positions of authority in the Millennium (cf. Revelation 1:6; 2:26-27; Daniel 7:18, 22, 27; Matthew 19:28; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; 2 Timothy 2:12) and has nothing to do with a Christian and Missionary Alliance, Pentecostal, or Word-Faith doctrine of throne-power in the dispensation of grace.
114 “God’s exalting the believer with Christ should not be considered as a separate act from exalting Christ. On the other hand, Christ’s own exaltation remains unique. Christ is united to believers precisely
the affirmation of the latter portion of Ephesians 1 from Christ’s exercising His Divine authority over and ruling the church to the church exercising Divine authority and ruling over herself (1:22). God’s power works gloriously in believers through Christ by the Holy Spirit, but it is God’s power, and remains His power, not the believer’s own power, and He exercises it, not the Christian. It is blessedly true that the Father’s supernatural power is working in the elect, but that is radically different from saying that believers can do everything that Christ did. Thus, none of MacMillan’s proof-texts for the doctrine that believers can exercise all of Christ’s power actually make such an assertion; on the contrary, the book of Ephesians refutes such a notion.

Furthermore, neither individual believers, nor the mythical universal, invisible church, are ever exhorted because of the truths in Ephesians 1-2 to “take [their] seat in the heavenly places” or “take [their] place with Christ” and then “authoritative[ly] rebuke” Satan. Believers are all already in the heavenly places in union with Christ; while they should grow in spiritual wisdom and understanding, see the greatness of God’s power towards them, and rejoice in the riches of the glory of His inheritance in them (Ephesians 1:17-20), there is no position mentioned in Ephesians 1-2 that only an elite minority of believers recognize and “take.” What is more, even when God willed the existence of the sign gifts, certain kinds of demons were only cast out, Christ stated, “by prayer and fasting.” The Lord Jesus never breathed a syllable (as Moses never dreamed of MacMillan’s doctrine because of his rod in Exodus 17) about an ability to cast out all demons by exercising throne-power, but, on the contrary, the Son of God specifically taught a method for casting out devils, when directly asked about how to perform this miracle (Matthew 17:19; Mark 9:28), that directly contradicts MacMillan’s position—and the Lord said that His prescribed method was the “only” one that worked for at least certain devils. Furthermore, the Son of God specifically gave the “twelve


Keswick neglect of this fact ties into the characteristic of Broadlands Conference and earlier Catholic and pagan mysticism that made union with God the endpoint of spiritual life; thus, at the Broadlands Conference, “[t]he highest life is to be one with God” (pg. 194, The Life that is Life Indeed: Reminiscences of the Broadlands Conferences, Edna V. Jackson. London: James Nisbet & Co, 1910), while in Scripture union with God in Christ takes place at the very commencement of spiritual life (cf. Romans 8:1; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 1:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; etc.)

Matthew 17:21; Mark 9:29. Luke 9:37-42 is a parallel passage; note that in Matthew 17:21 the TR follows 99.5% of Greek MSS, all the ancient versions except the Coptic, and scores of patristic writers; in Mark 9:29, καὶ νηστεία is found in c. 99.8% of Greek MSS and all the ancient versions; cf. Textual and Translational Notes on the Gospels, J. P. Green.
[apostles] . . . power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils,”117 which would be unnecessary if all believers throughout time already had such abilities and simply needed to claim throne-authority to exercise them. While MacMillan’s key verse, Ephesians 2:6, does indeed assert that Christians (all believers, not only a select few that “take” a seat) are in union with Christ and thus “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,” Paul does not draw MacMillan’s conclusion from the wonderful truth of Ephesians 2:6. The inspired consequence drawn from Ephesians 2:6 is not a matter of speculation, but is stated in Ephesians 2:7: “That118 in the ages to come119 he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” Similarly, the Apostle’s conclusion in Colossians 3:1-5 from the fact that saints are “risen with Christ” and their “life is hid with Christ in God” is that believers must “seek those things which are above, not on things on the earth,” and “[m]ortify . . . [their] members which are upon the earth.” Scripture simply never draws from the blessed truth of the Christian’s union with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension MacMillan’s conclusions that believers can exercise all the authority of the Lord Jesus over demons when they employ proper techniques of accessing Christ’s “throne power.”120 Scripture concludes from the

118 ἵνα indicating purpose; believers were made alive, raised, and seated with Christ “in order that” or for the purpose of manifesting the exceeding riches of the Father’s grace in the ages to come.
119 The phrase seems to refer specifically to the future eschaton rather than to something that begins in this dispensation; cf. Ephesians 2:7’s ἐν τοῖς αἰῶναῖς τοῖς ἐπερχομένοις, “in the ages/worlds to come,” with the only other similar texts in the NT: “But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come [ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχόμενῳ] eternal life” (Mark 10:30); “Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come [ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχόμενῳ] life everlasting” (Luke 18:30). Note also Ephesians 1:21, “not only in this world, but also in that which is to come,” σὺ μόνον ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι, and Ephesians 2:2; 3:9, 11, 21; 6:12. The plural αἰώνες, “ages,” of Ephesians 2:7 is comparable to the ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων, “from the beginning of the world/ages,” and κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων, “eternal purpose/purpose of the ages” of Ephesians 3:9, 11.
120 Indeed, Ephesians 1-2 specifically speaks of God the Father’s power in exercise, not that of Christ. While the Father does give Christ authority in 1:20-23, nowhere in Ephesians 1:1-2:10 is there any record of Christ actively doing anything at all—certainly no record of His exercising authority appears. Rather, the chapters describe the Father’s power exercised towards the elect and towards Christ. The Father blesses, elects, predestinates, accepts believers for Christ’s sake, makes known His will, gathers together in one all things, seals with the Spirit, gives spiritual wisdom and understanding, enlightens eyes, works powerfully towards the elect, raises and exalts Christ, loves and raises the elect from spiritual death to life and exaltation, displays His grace towards the elect to eternity, gives them the gift of eternal life, ordains them to good works as His workmanship by the working of His great power, and so on. All this is done to the praise of the Father’s glory. It would be invalid to argue that believers exercise the Father’s power because of Christ’s exaltation, and MacMillan does not frame his case so—“throne power” is allegedly exercised, not because of the Father’s omnipotence, but because of Christ’s exaltation. Indeed, the Father’s power was working in believers even before their regeneration, for the Father raised them to life while they were still in a state of spiritual death (2:1-7), but few would wish to say that even the unregenerate elect can
union of believers with Christ in His ascension that God will demonstrate His grace in them for all eternity to come, and also exhorts them to live holy lives, enabled by the Father’s mighty power that works in them. The inspired conclusion Paul draws in 2:7 (cf. 2:10) from the believer’s union with Christ of 2:6, that the Father’s empowerment sanctifies and eternally secures every Christian, and such a demonstration of saving grace and love redounds to the everlasting glory of the God of love and grace, is an infinitely more glorious conclusion than if the Apostle had merely averred that ability of the sort MacMillan claimed was bestowed on him and others who had discovered his spiritual secret, so that one could in this life follow CMA practices, cast out some demons here and there, and perform other marvels. MacMillan’s conclusion is a tragic disappointment when compared to the Apostle Paul’s. Thankfully, one cannot build doctrine from conclusions not made in Scripture, so Paul’s conclusions are true, and MacMillan’s are not. MacMillan’s position has about as much support in Ephesians 1-2 as the idea that believers can fly in the air by flapping their arms because they are in union with One who has ascended to heaven.

MacMillan’s affirmations that believers are “immersed in the omnipotence of God” and that “human hands [share] the throttle of infinite power” prepare the way for the Word-Faith heresy that Christians are “little gods.” After all, Christ does not just exercise authority over evil spirits—He sustains the entire universe and exercises authority over absolutely everything. MacMillan himself, in other writings, taught that believers can control “the fierce disturbance of nature” in storms and otherwise control

Note also the development of 1:19-20 (“And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward [καὶ τι τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ εἰς ἡμᾶς] who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places”) through 2:5-6 and on to 3:20 (“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us [κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἡμῖν]”), rounding out the doctrinal section of Ephesians, chapters 1-3, in preparation for the practical section, chapters 4-6. God was exercising omnipotent power, the same kind of power that raised and exalted Christ, within the Ephesians to secure their sanctification and ultimate redemption (1:19-20; 2:5-10; 3:20)—“therefore . . . walk worthy” (4:1, οὖν . . . ἀξίος περιπατήσατε) by living in the holy manner described in chapters 4-6. Again, Paul’s conclusion is not, “therefore, exercise throne-power to perform Keswick continuationist, Pentecostal, charismatic, and Word of Faith miracles,” but “therefore be holy.”
the weather, exercise authority to make both domesticated and wild animals submit to their will, stop their houses from catching on fire, prevent diseases from infecting groups of people, change the actions of national governments, exercise authority over demons that cause anger and other sinful emotions, and exercise authority over the world to control the events that take place in it and prevent wars, a “belief [MacMillan] inherited from the Overcomer Movement in which Jessie Penn-Lewis . . . was involved.” Indeed, one who holds MacMillan’s doctrine becomes “a partner with

122 Thus, Christ allegedly exercised throne-power as the representative Man in Matthew 8:26 to make a storm cease, as “the powers of the air (Eph. 2:2) . . . were behind the fierce disturbance of nature,” MacMillan affirmed (pg. 28, *The Full Gospel Adult Sunday School Quarterly*, John A. MacMillan, Nov. 26, 1939), although Psalm 107:24-30 (cf. a cf. Psalm 18:15; 104:7; 106:9; Isaiah 50:2; Nahum 1:4), which is alluded to in Christ’s causing the storm to cease in Matthew 8, actually affirms that Jehovah, not fallen angels, makes storms to both arise and cease, so Matthew ascribes to God what MacMillan ascribes to fallen angels, confusing the Apostle’s point, that Christ is Jehovah, because He can make storms to cease in this manner (cf. Matthew 14:24-34), with an affirmation that men can exercise throne-power over evil spirits that allegedly control the weather, one entirely absent from the text of Matthew 8 and the rest of the Bible. However, while MacMillan does not have the Bible on his side, he does have Jessie Penn-Lewis, who misinterpreted the passage as MacMillan did (pg. 374, “How to Pray for Missionaries,” *The Alliance Weekly*, 72:24, June 12, 1937).


124 Pg. 124, *Only Believe*, Paul King.


127 Thus, in “The Authority of the Believer [MacMillan] recounted [certain] incidents in which he exercised spiritual authority over demonically inspired anger . . . [such as when two] Christian workers, a husband and wife, had been quarrelling . . . [and] yelling at each other, John and Isabel [MacMillan] [q]uietly but firmly . . . took authority over the spirits of evil . . . and commanded their withdrawal. Almost immediately, the quarrelling stopped . . . [and as] the authority was day by day held and renewed, the spirits were kept in check” (Pgs. 93-95, *A Believer with Authority*, King; King recounts how MacMillan also exercised authority over demons of fear, etc.). However, “eventually . . . the two separated” (pg. 94, *ibid*.), but perhaps, since MacMillan had driven out and kept away the demons of anger, the two did not divorce in anger, but the couple were full of love for each other and sweetness of spirit and engaged in the awful sin of divorce (Malachi 2:16) on that account.


129 Pgs. 225-226, *A Believer with Authority*, King. Note also that both the Word of Faith movement and nineteenth century metaphysical cults promulgated the doctrine that the believer could control his environment after the manner of MacMillan (cf. pgs. 105-106, *A Different Gospel*, McConnell).
his Lord in the government of the universe,” releasing “divine power” for “the control of the activities of the rulers of mankind” so that at the Christian’s “word . . . wars are hindered or delayed, calamities are averted, and national and individual blessings are bestowed”\(^{130}\) and by the “command of faith” a disciple of MacMillan can move “mountain[s] in the name of Christ . . . put[ting] his hand on the dynamic force that controls the universe . . . [h]eavenly energy is released, and his behest is obeyed,”\(^ {131}\) for “the power and authority of the risen Head will come in due time to full development in the body . . . overcoming saints[.]”\(^ {132}\) Indeed, MacMillan and his followers even claimed to exercise authority to “command [God] concerning the work of His hands” since “the Almighty . . . share[s] with human hands the throttle of divine power. . . . As . . . authoritative intercessors . . . speak the word of command, God obeys.”\(^ {133}\) Scripture teaches that Christians must obey God, but MacMillan teaches that God must obey Christians. This is wretched and blasphemous idolatry.

MacMillan states that “sects have departed from the faith [by] . . . accept[ing] human guesses, which have been enlarged into more or less elaborated doctrines. There is in many of them a foundation of scriptural truth, to which has been added a superstructure of human reason, which adds to or takes away from the divine original.”\(^ {134}\) Unfortunately, from the truths of the believer’s union with Christ, the fact that God works powerfully to sanctify and secure the believer, the reality of the evil work of Satan and

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MacMillan affirms that Isaiah 45:11 teaches this doctrine of commanding God, although not a solitary example anywhere in Scripture is found, from the time Isaiah wrote until close of the canon, of such commands by mortals to the Almighty. It is clear in Isaiah 45:11 that “ask” and “command” are in parallel clauses, and the reference is to the children of Israel as Jehovah’s “sons” (Isaiah 54:13) and as the work of His hands (cf. Isaiah 60:21). The Lord commands Israel in Isaiah 45:11 to seek and supplicate Him and obtain His wisdom about His future purposes with their nation, in particular, contextually, with the deliverance that was to be brought to them by king Cyrus. The text is not addressed to Gentile members of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Pentecostals, or members of the Word-Faith movement, and has nothing to do with the way the entire universe is run, but is rather about God’s purposes with Israel; it certainly has nothing whatever to do with such blasphemous folly as ordering God about how He ought to run His universe. The doctrine of MacMillan astonishingly makes the clay of Isaiah 45:9-11 give orders to the Potter.

Watchman Nee also adopted the heresy that the believer can command God (cf. pgs. 72-77, *God’s Plan and the Overcomers*), and the idea of commanding God is a well-known Word of Faith blasphemy.

\(^ {134}\) Pg. 159, *The Authority of the Believer*, MacMillan.
his demons, and the fact that if Christians “resist the devil, he will flee” (James 4:7), MacMillan’s own superstructure adds and takes away from the truth of Scripture by affirming, among numbers of other grievous errors, that Keswick continuationism is true and so the sign gifts are operative today, that believers can be demon possessed, that believers can command God, and that believers have the same authority as Jesus Christ over evil spirits and over the world. His doctrine is cultic on his own definition, a ripe soil for the abominable heresies the Word-Faith cult\(^\text{135}\) and the charismatic movement in general developed from his works.\(^\text{136}\)

The Word-Faith or Health and Wealth Gospel movement has as its spiritual “‘father’ . . . the late Kenneth E. Hagin . . . [and its] leading living proponent [is] . . . Kenneth Copeland.”\(^\text{137}\) The “founding father of the Faith movement,” through the influence of E. W. Kenyon\(^\text{138}\) on many doctrines and John A. MacMillan on others, “is commonly held to be Kenneth Erwin Hagin.”\(^\text{139}\) “Hagin’s influence is omnipresent in Faith circles. His mark is printed indelibly upon his countless disciples, such as Copeland, Price, and Capps . . . All of the major ministers of the Faith movement readily admit Hagin’s tutelage. He is universally recognized in the movement as both a teacher and a prophet.”\(^\text{140}\) “[C]ultic ideas . . . syncretized from metaphysics, of healing, positive confession, and prosperity . . . account for the success of the [Word-Faith] movement . . . distinguish it most, cause its amazing growth, and occupy center stage[.]. . . These cultic ideas are widely accepted in the independent charismatic movement and are even proclaimed to be a key to the progressive revelation of God being poured out in the end

\(^{135}\) “[A]ll the elements that are common to the cults exist within the [Word-Faith] movement: a distorted Christology, an exalted view of man, a theology based on human works, a belief that new revelation from within the group is unlocking ‘secrets’ that have been hidden from the church for years, extrabiblical human writings that are deemed inspired and authoritative, the use and abuse of evangelical terminology, and an exclusivity that compels adherents to shun any criticism. . . . [T]he movement is well on its way to being established as a false cult in every sense of the term” (pg. 327, Charismatic Chaos, John MacArthur).

\(^{136}\) The fact that the charismatic and Word-Faith movements developed, in significant measure, in association with doctrines and practices of MacMillan does not mean that he would have endorsed everything practiced by charismatic and Word-Faith teachers today; indeed, some of what the Word-Faith movement teaches is so repulsive and pagan that it is very likely that MacMillan would have denounced it, even though it grew out of his own teaching.


\(^{138}\) Kenyon also adopted and preached the throne power doctrine that MacMillan derived from his misinterpretation of Ephesians 1-2; see, e. g., pgs. 79ff., 162-163, In His Presence, Kenyon.

\(^{139}\) Pg. 3, A Different Gospel, McConnell.

\(^{140}\) Pgs. 12, 55, A Different Gospel, McConnell.
Indeed, the Word of Faith system is “becom[ing] (if it is not already) [a] permanent fixtur[e] in the independent charismat[ic] movement.” While Jesus is God and people must be born again, the Word of Faith heresy teaches “that Jesus was born again so that we might become little gods.” Word-Faith teachers also claim that the believer uses God, rather than God using the believer. “In the Word Faith system God is not Lord of all; he is not able to work until we release him to do so. He is dependent on human instruments, human faith, and above all human words to get his work done.” Since believers have God’s authority, “we are little gods and we [must] begin to act like little gods.” Indeed, as Hagin affirmed, believers “are Christ. That’s who they are. They are Christ.” Word-Faith teachers also affirm the idolatrous blasphemy that “Jesus gave up his deity and even took on Satan’s nature to die for our sins.” They adopt grossly heretical ideas of the atonement:

Christ’s death was a ransom paid to Satan . . . [Christ] accepted the sin nature of Satan into his own spirit . . . [and He] was dragged into hell by Satan and tormented for three days and three nights. . . . Jesus made himself obedient to Satan . . . [and took on] his nature . . . allowed the devil to drag Him into the depths of hell . . . [Thus, Christ] need[ed] to be . . . born [again] because He became like we were: separated from God. . . . Jesus is the first person that was ever born again. . . . His spirit need[ed] to be born again . . . [b]ecause it was estranged from God.

Word-Faith teaching also denies the true gospel by affirming that one personally receives Christ’s righteousness, not by imputation, but by impartation, so that one is actually and personally as righteous as Christ (cf. 1 John 1:8, 10), denies very plain texts of Scripture by teaching that everyone is supposed to be rich and that being poor is a sin, claims that whatever one speaks out loud in faith one will receive (positive confession or “name it and claim it” doctrine), because of the creative power of one’s faith (as a little god, after all), and teaches many other abominable heresies. “Those in the Faith movement are now, and have been for years, preaching a different gospel.” David Cloud wrote:

141 Pgs. 49-50, A Different Gospel, McConnell.
142 Pg. 91, A Different Gospel, McConnell.
143 Pg. 325, Charismatic Chaos, John MacArthur.
144 Pg. 329, Charismatic Chaos, MacArthur.
146 “As Christ Is—So Are We,” Kenneth E. Hagin. (Tulsa, OK: Rhema), cassette tape #44H06, cited pg. 334, Charismatic Chaos, MacArthur.
147 Pg. 336, Charismatic Chaos, John MacArthur.
148 Contrast the teaching of the following quotation with that of 1 Peter 2:24; Colossians 2:13-14, and many other passages.
151 Pg. xviii, A Different Gospel, D. R. McConnell.
The Word-Faith movement is a very influential part of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement today. It is also known as “Positive Confession” or simply the “Faith” movement. It has no organizational or denominational structure or hierarchy but it is promoted by many prominent Pentecostal leaders who have large and prosperous ministries. The Word-Faith movement is powered by massive amounts of money that its teachers raise through their promise of healing and prosperity and power. It is represented by the Trinity Broadcasting Network, a half-billion dollar corporation that beams Word-Faith teaching throughout the world. In general it holds that healing is guaranteed to those who have faith, that Jesus was rich and that He desires for His followers to be financially prosperous, that faith is a creative force that can be used to shape one’s world, that when Adam fell he forfeited the nature of God and that salvation requires removing Satan’s nature from mankind, that Jesus did not make the atonement for sin by His death and blood but by taking upon Himself the nature of Satan on the cross then going to hell and overcoming the devil there and being born again and thus erasing Satan’s nature from man, that Jesus is establishing a new race of little Christs that are equal to Him and that can do what He did.

While the Word-Faith teachers hold certain things in common and while all of them hold to most of the aforementioned doctrines, they are highly individualistic and do not necessarily hold to every single one. Some of the proponents of the Word-Faith doctrine are Kenneth Hagin, Sr., Kenneth Hagin, Jr., Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, David Yonggi Cho, Paul Crouch, John Avanzini, Robert Tilton, R.W. Shambach, Rod Parsley, Fred Price, Joel Osteen, Crefo Dollar, Marilyn Hickey, Charles Capps, Peter Popoff, Morris Cerullo, John Bevere, Markus Bishop, Juanita Bynum, Kim Clement, Paula White, and Rodney Howard-Browne. At its heart is the doctrine that whatever a believer claims by faith, he will have. The late Kenneth Hagin, Sr., said, “Your confession of faith in God’s Word will bring healing or whatever it is you need from God into the present tense and make it a reality in your life!” (Hagin, The Word of Faith, Dec. 1992).

Ken Sarles summarizes the doctrines of the Word-Faith movement:

Advocates of the prosperity gospel claim that it is God’s will for every believer to be prosperous. . . . Prosperity theology . . . seems to be a blending of the positive thinking emphasis of a Norman Vincent Peale or a Robert Schuller and the faith healing ministry of an Oral Roberts. It certainly has a charismatic flavoring to it but is by no means limited to Pentecostalism. . . . Some of the prominent personalities of prosperity include Kenneth Hagin, pastor of the Rhema Bible Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma; Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, founders of Kenneth Copeland Ministries in Fort Worth, Texas; Bob and Marte Tilton, founding pastors of the Word of Faith Church, Farmers Branch, Texas; John Osteen, pastor of the Lakewood Church, Houston, Texas; Jerry Savelle, evangelist and former associate of Kenneth Copeland; Charles and Frances Hunter, faith healers and founders of the City of Light, Kingwood, Texas; and Charles Capps, an Oklahoma pastor. . . . [T]he good news of the prosperity gospel is how to be healthy, wealthy, and demon-free. . . . The provision of healing, according to the prosperity gospel, is found in the Atonement . . . it is never God’s will for anyone to be sick. . . . The possession of healing is through the exercise of faith. The approach to faith can best be understood by the phrases “name it and claim it” or “believe and receive.” . . . [As] succinctly put by Hagin: “Faith’s confessions create reality.” . . . The confession of faith, it is believed, will cure any disease or physical handicap, since healing is always the will of God and has been provided for in the Atonement. . . .

The purpose of wealth is philanthropic. . . . When one gives to others, whether money or something else, more will be given by God in return. Soon a prosperity cycle begins, in which one gives and receives more in return, allowing him to give even more, meaning he will receive yet more in return; and so the cycle continues. . . . The promise of wealth [is] the basis for the whole prosperity movement[]. . . . The provision of wealth centers on the application of the Abrahamic Covenant. The personal blessings God bestowed on Abraham by the covenant He made with him are extrapolated as benefits for believers today. . . . [T]he Law of Moses was given so that Abraham’s descendants could possess the same degree of prosperity Abraham enjoyed.

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153 Pg. 23, How to Turn Your Faith Loose, Hagin.
Possession of the wealth provided through the Abrahamic Covenant is achieved by knowing, obeying, and believing. First there must be knowledge of the promise before the promise can be claimed. . . . Obedience is a second key to becoming prosperous. . . . The third element, faith, is exercised in the same way as in achieving divine health. Faith amounts to claiming authority over the financial resources already guaranteed by God. . . . No one need live in poverty. Wealth and riches are there for the asking—in faith. All that stands between a person and financial blessing is his decision to demand what he wants. . . . The prospects of wealth, according to some prosperity leaders, are truly astounding. The hundredfold return of Mark 10:30 is claimed as the basis of God’s financial dealings with His servants. “You give $1 for the gospel’s sake and $100 belongs to you, give $10 and receive $1,000; give $1,000 and receive $100,000…. Give one house and receive one hundred houses or one house worth one hundred times as much…. In short, Mark 10:30 is a very good deal.”154 . . . No wonder the motto of the prosperity movement is, “You can have what you say!” . . . The presence of demonic activity in the lives of Christians is an important plank in the prosperity platform. . . . [A]ll incurable diseases are caused by evil spirits. Demons inhabit not only people, but also homes, cars, and other mechanical devices. . . . The process of casting out demons solves the believer’s “demonic dilemma.” . . . Jesus has given him authority to cast out unclean spirits (Matt 10:1). This gives the individual believer authority over the world of evil spirits. . . . In the procedure for casting out demons Satan is bound by the authority of Jesus so that he cannot render aid to his evil associates. Then the demon is addressed, commanded to name himself, and cast out. Since demons can do such things as planting seeds of disease and stopping the flow of financial wealth, the casting out of demons is necessary to insure continued health and prosperity. . . .

According to those in the movement, special, verbal revelation did not cease with the closing of the New Testament canon but continues today. Leaders frequently support their teachings with revelations, prophecies, dreams, and visions. The implication is that they share the same status with Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles as dispensers of progressively revealed truth. . . . Prosperity hermeneutics also leaves much to be desired. The method of interpreting the biblical text is highly subjective and arbitrary. Bible verses are quoted in abundance without attention to grammatical indicators, semantic nuances, or literary and historical context. The result is a set of ideas and principles based on distortion of textual meaning. . . . The proponents of prosperity have gone astray concerning the doctrine of God . . . [t]he sovereignty of God is . . . greatly undermined in the outworking of the prosperity gospel. Indeed what emerges is a new view of God. First, even God Himself has failed. “God hoped for things. He had a plan. He had desires. He hoped they would come to pass, but they failed.”155 . . . Second, not only can God inspire man but man can inspire God. “When . . . you start believing it, God starts believing it . . . and things happen, praise God.”156 Third, God is bound by His own laws, such as the law of compensation, and man becomes the initiator, forcing God to comply by holding up His end of the bargain. . . . In the prosperity scheme of things what God’s sovereignty lacks human sovereignty supplies. Believers are considered to be “God-like creatures” and “supermen.”157 . . . The believer’s authority is delegated by God Himself, and not even God will interfere with it: “God is not going to override your authority . . . He has given you authority in the earth.”158 The absurd conclusion of this view of human authority is that a believer should be able to live perpetually in health and presumably youthfulness, and never die! Is it not strange that none of the prosperity leaders themselves have yet exercised their authority to that extent? Nonetheless these same leaders instruct others how to exercise their authority. Each Christian is considered a king in God’s kingdom. This means he can decide what he wants and then decree it just as a monarch would. . . . In the prosperity movement man has become the ruler and God the servant. In its shift away from theocentrism the prosperity gospel has reached the deadend of anthropocentrism, the deification of humanity. A striking illustration of deification at work can be found in the simple

154  Pg. 48, God’s Will Is Prosperity, Copeland.
155  Pg. 113, God’s Laws of Success, Tilton.
156  Pg. 109, Ibid.
157  Pgs. 26, 28, Ibid.
158  Pg. 72, God’s Will Is Prosperity, Copeland.
According to Kenneth Copeland the human will “is actually a godlike will because man has the right to choose his own eternal destiny. Only a god has that kind of choice!” 159 . . . In the prosperity gospel little is said about the curse of the Fall, the noetic effects of sin, or man’s constitutional depravity . . . the corruption of fallen human nature that remains even in the redeemed is totally ignored. By contrast the total freedom of the will is everywhere asserted, not only in salvation but also in claiming miracles leading to a healthy, wealthy lifestyle. The ability to decide what one wants and then to demand it from God goes beyond the most radical form of Pelagianism. Human sin has been replaced with human sovereignty. . . . The only sin given attention is doubt or unbelief that prevents the achievement of one’s full potential. Doubting of any kind is anathema to the person seeking prosperity because it produces “the power of negative thinking.” . . . In other words negative thinking creates a negative reality. . . .

Without question the prosperity movement is characterized by an obsession with the demonic. The reality of God’s use of secondary means in the physical realm has been replaced with a sensational concept of demonic causation. . . . The prosperity movement seems to have reverted to a form of animism, which holds that evil spirits inhabit and control both animate and inanimate objects. Faith healers in the movement have more in common with witch doctors than medical doctors. . . . The archenemy in the prosperity pantheon of demons is Satan himself. He is virtually omnipresent, as he is considered the ultimate cause of all poverty and sickness. However, even Satan is limited in his activities by the believer’s authority. As Gloria Copeland has expressed it, “Satan can only do what you say . . . He is bound by the law of God that says you can have whatsoever you say.” 160 Satan can only work when the individual believer is ignorant of the Christian’s authority to bind him. The ignorant convert can experience satanic control of his thoughts and words so that he will believe and speak what the devil wants to come to pass. By contrast, the believer armed with prosperity teaching will bind Satan so that he can speak into existence whatever he wants. . . .

The biblical doctrine of Satan presents him as a far more crafty and subtle being than those in the prosperity movement admit. Since Satan is the great deceiver and the father of lies (John 8:44), he is probably promoting the prosperity caricature of his limitations. It is likely that those who believe they can demand financial success and that Satan is the only obstacle are themselves under satanic delusion. The prosperity belief that Satan can be easily bound actually gives the devil greater leverage and increases his opportunity to deceive. . . . The angeloology of these “prophets of profit,” like the other divisions of theology studied thus far, rests more on wishful thinking than on accurate exegesis. . . .

Perhaps the most difficult concept in the prosperity gospel to understand is human faith. It has been divested of its biblical foundation and given an entirely new meaning. Faith is defined as a positive force. . . . Faith becomes a power exerted by individuals. . . . [Also,] [b]elief of the heart is tied to confession of the mouth to create a new reality . . . faith is a form of magic, with the spoken word as the incantation. The interior logic of prosperity thought argues that since man is a godlike creature, his words, when spoken in faith, have the same intrinsic creative power as God’s. 161

Truly, the “Word Faith movement may be the most dangerous false system that has grown out of the charismatic movement so far.” 162

“[U]ndoubtedly the Pentecostal movement picked up the concept of the authority of the believer from MacMillan’s material,” 163 as MacMillan’s doctrine of authority is

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159 Pg. 15, The Laws of Prosperity, Copeland
160 Pg. 106, God’s Will Is Prosperity, Copeland; italics hers.
just about identical to that of Pentecostalism and the Word of Faith movement. MacMillan also influenced the supporters of the anti-Trinitarian modalist heretic and faith-healer William Branham. MacMillan’s teaching that demons want to possess people because they are disembodied, which is related to Jessie Penn-Lewis’s earlier doctrine in *War on the Saints*, has been picked up by the charismatic Third Wave and other continuationist fanatics. MacMillan’s practice of naming demons as a prerequisite to casting them out mirrors Word-Faith practice, as does his belief that “doubts [can be] injected into the [Christian’s] mind by lying spirits” and his practice

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164 Compare pgs. 139-140, *Another Gospel*, McConnell.

165 “John A. MacMillan’s Teaching Regarding the Authority of the Believer and its Impact on the Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Charismatic Movements,” Paul L. King. SPS History Interest Group, Oral Roberts University. Presented at the 30th Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. Elec. acc. http://www.pneumafoundation.org/article.jsp?article=/article_0027.xml. Branham “denied the doctrine of the Trinity, teaching instead the ‘Jesus only’ doctrine. He taught that he was the prophet Elijah, whose ministry would result in the return of Jesus. . . . [P]ockets of his followers . . . believed that he was not just a prophet, but also the incarnation of Jesus himself” (pgs. 165-166, *A Different Gospel*, McConnell). McConnell notes that Branham was able to do miracles that “remain unparalleled” by “modern [Pentecostal] healing evangelists” (pg. 165, *ibid.*) despite the fact that he was an idolator who was eternally damned. The supernatural lights that were present in the Welsh holiness revival, and were claimed in India in the tongues-speech associated with Mrs. Ramabai, and likewise in the origination of Pentecostalism at Azuza Street in Los Angeles, were also present with Branham.


167 “There are many demons that don’t have a body. Having a body [for a demon] is like having a car. They want to have a car so they can get around. If they don’t have a body, they’re a second-class demon. They’re not first class. I’m not kidding you. That’s the way it works. And so [to them] having a body is a big deal. That’s why they don’t want to give it up” (John Wimber, “Healing Seminar,” 1981, acc. pg. 172, *Charismatic Chaos*, John MacArthur).

168 “In the procedure for casting out demons [in Word-Faith theology] Satan is bound . . . the demon is addressed, commanded to name himself, and cast out. Since demons can do such things as planting seeds of disease and stopping the flow of financial wealth, the casting out of demons is necessary to insure continued health and prosperity” (pg. 336, “A Theological Evaluation of the Prosperity Gospel,” Ken L. Sarles. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 143:572 (Oct 86) 329-352). Other segments of Pentecostalism likewise employ the naming technique, which is rooted in paganism.

169 Pg. 117, *The Authority of the Believer*, MacMillan. Similarly, Kenneth Hagin taught: “the devil can put all kinds of thoughts into [a believer’s] mind” (“Words,” Kenneth Hagin. (Tulsa, OK: Faith Library, 1979), pgs. 20-21, cited pg. 346, *Charismatic Chaos*, John MacArthur). In this notion they followed Jessie Penn-Lewis: “Countless ‘thoughts’ and ‘beliefs,’ which are opposed to the truth of God, are injected into the minds of Christians by teaching spirits, rendering them ineffective in the warfare with sin and Satan, and subject to the power of evil spirits, although they are saved for eternity through their faith in Christ, and accept the authority of the Scriptures, and know the power of the Cross” (Chapter 1, *War on the Saints*, Jessie Penn-Lewis; cf. pg. 40, *The Overcomer* March 1910). Indeed, not thoughts only, but even demonic doctrines are directly injected into the mind of believers, thought Mrs. Penn-Lewis: “[D]eceiving spirits . . . insert their ‘doctrines’ into the minds of Christians, as well as heathen, and make them think they are coming to their own conclusions. They give ‘beautiful thoughts,’ and ‘wonderful openings,’ of ‘texts’ to men’s natural minds. . . . The teaching spirits have succeeded in inserting into the
of “plead[ing] the blood according to Revelation 12:11” as a way to work miracles. MacMillan also anticipated a “favorite term in the Word Faith movement . . . positive confession . . . the teaching that words have creative power . . . [so that] [w]hat you say . . . determines everything that happens to you.” Indeed, “[p]ositive confession is, undoubtedly, the most distinctive doctrine of the [Word of] Faith movement[]. . . . The secret to confession is to know the nature and extent of the perfect redemption in Christ, to know one’s ‘identity’ and ‘rights’ in Christ, and to confess verbally the provision of Christ in every need and problem of life.” However, “those who began the practices of positive mental attitude and positive confession [as practiced in the Word of Faith movement] attributed their ability” to receive things from their positive confessions “to psychic and occult power.” MacMillan, nevertheless, affirmed the Word of Faith concept that words have creative power. He wrote:

The apostles [in Luke 17] . . . were stirred to ask the Lord . . . ['']Give us the power and . . . the same authority which thou dost manifest[''] . . . [Such authority is exercised] by the word of the believer. It is a good exercise to “say” aloud to our difficulties, as we kneel in prayer, “Be thou removed.” The saying, if in faith in the name of the Lord, will cause a stirring at the roots . . . authority over the opposing powers . . . heal[ing] the sick . . . the accomplishment of impossibilities.”

From MacMillan’s doctrine that believers can “exercise the authority of [Christ’s] throne” because in Ephesians 1-2 “[t]he same verb . . . expresses the reviving of Christ [and allegedly] expresses also the reviving of His people. . . . the very act of God which raised the Lord from among the dead, raised also His body . . . the Church,” Word-Faith teachers have concluded that believers could have defeated Satan and done just what Jesus did in His life and redemptive work on earth. As Kenneth Copeland

minds of those who truly accept the authority of the Scriptures, and know the power fo the Cross, countless ‘thoughts’ and ‘beliefs’ which are opposed to the Truth of God and render them powerless in the warfare with sin and Satan, and subject to the power of evil spirits. These subtle thoughts from Satan [are] inserted into the minds of Christians of all classes and degrees [and] are too many to enumerate” (pgs. 71-72, “Believe not every spirit,” Overcomer 1912. Italics in original).

Pgs. 184-185, A Believer with Authority, King.


Pgs. 7-8, The Authority of the Believer, MacMillan.
blaspemously affirmed: “The Spirit of God spoke to me, and He said . . . A twice-born man [Jesus Christ] whipped Satan in his own domain. . . . A born-again man defeated Satan. . . . And I said, ‘Well, now You don’t mean—You couldn’t dare mean that I could’ve done the same thing.’ He said, ‘Oh yeah! If you’d known that—had the knowledge of the Word of God that he did, you could’ve done the same thing. Because you’re a reborn man too. . . . The same power that I used to raise [Christ] from the dead I used to raise you from your death in trespasses and sins.”

MacMillan’s doctrine that Christ is “wholly dependent” on the church, like a head needs a body to carry out its plans, matches the fact that in the Word-Faith movement “God is . . . not able to work until we release him to do so. He is dependent on human instruments, human faith, and above all human words to get his work done,” for “Jesus, according to Word-Faith theology, has no authority on earth, having delegated it all to the church. . . . [as] Kenneth E. Hagin develops . . . in his book *The Authority of the Believer*, long sections of which were taken verbatim” from MacMillan. Thus, the Word-Faith movement “makes wide use of the writings of . . . leaders affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, a twentieth-century denomination which grew out of the nineteenth-century Higher Life holiness movement . . . [in particular] *The Authority of the Believer* by J. A. MacMillan.”

The “original source of” the charismatic and Word-Faith authority doctrine is “John A. MacMillan and his classic holiness roots in the Higher Life and Keswick movements.” Indeed:

By far the greatest popular dissemination of [Macmillan’s] teaching on the authority of the believer has been through the charismatic movement. . . . the influence of MacMillan’s writings . . . has [in fact] become the major impact on the charismatic movement . . . [through] the writings of Kenneth Hagin. . . . other Word of Faith leaders such as Kenneth Copeland and Charles Capps have further expanded upon Hagin’s teachings on the authority of the believer. . . . MacMillan’s

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182 E. g., Hagin relates how, in a vision, “Jesus” appeared to him and said that He was not able to cast out a demon because, as the spirit being called “Jesus” that appeared to Hagin affirmed: “I immediately delegated my authority on earth to the Church, and I can work only through the Church. . . . Your head cannot exercise any authority anywhere except through your body.” MacMillan’s teaching in *The Authority of the Believer* is then set forth, as eisegeted from Ephesians 1-2, and Hagin concludes: “In Ephesians we also saw . . . that the Head is totally dependent on the Body for carrying out His plans (pgs. 27-37, 47-48, *The Believer’s Authority*, Hagin).
basic principles furnish the foundation of contemporary charismatic understanding and practice of the concept.\footnote{185}

Thus, “Kenneth E. Hagin . . . the most extensive propogator of [Word-Faith] teaching . . . [received his] teaching on the authority of the believer . . . most directly from CMA leader John MacMillan. He also acknowledges the influence of . . . Higher Life leaders . . . [such as] Simpson.”\footnote{186} “In 1967 Hagin began teaching on the authority of the believer in churches and on radio. Also in that year, his booklet \textit{Authority of the Believer}\footnote{187} was published. Hagin quoted MacMillan’s writing [without citation, so] extensively so that some have accused him of plagiarism[.]”\footnote{188} Indeed, it is obvious that “Hagin plagiarized the writings of . . . Christian and Missionary Alliance minister . . . John A. MacMillan” since “Hagin lifted at least three-quarters of his book \textit{The Authority of the Believer} from MacMillan’s . . . article[s] of the same title.”\footnote{189} Hagin’s \textit{The Authority of the Believer} has been “one of his best selling” works, and was “taken word-for-word from . . . John A. MacMillan[,] . . . In the content of \textit{Authority of the Believer}, Hagin’s plagiarism of MacMillan is word-for-word and where it is not word-for-word, it is thought-for-thought.\footnote{190} Since “nearly every major figure in . . . the Word Faith . . . movement was mentored by Kenneth Hagin or one of his disciples[,] [and] [e]very doctrinal distinctive of the movement is traceable to Hagin,”\footnote{191} but Hagin himself was very strongly impacted by MacMillan, John MacMillan’s influence is central to the development of the Word-Faith movement. It is consequently of no surprise that “Kenneth Copeland has [also] taught on the authority of the believer from the same passage of Scripture of MacMillan’s exposition, Ephesians 1. He also used the same police officer illustration used by

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item \footnote{185} “John A. MacMillan’s Teaching Regarding the Authority of the Believer and its Impact on the Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Charismatic Movements,” Paul L. King.
\item \footnote{186} Pgs. 65-66, \textit{Only Believe}, Paul L. King.
\item \footnote{188} “John A. MacMillan’s Teaching Regarding the Authority of the Believer and its Impact on the Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Charismatic Movements,” Paul L. King.
\item \footnote{190} Pgs. 67-69, \textit{A Different Gospel}, McConnell. Hagin’s explanation for his plagiarism is that “the Holy Spirit inspired both MacMillan’s and Hagin’s version of \textit{The Authority of the Believer} three-and-a-half decades apart” (pg. 69, \textit{ibid.}), so inspiration, not plagiarism, explains why 75\% or more of the content of the two compositions is identical.
\item \footnote{191} Pg. 351, \textit{Charismatic Chaos}, MacArthur.
\end{thebibliography}
MacMillan. ... Charles Capps wrote a booklet Authority in Three Worlds on the authority of the believer.” MacMillan did not influence only Word-Faith heavyweights such as Hagin, Copeland, and Capps, but others also, in vast numbers:

[O]ther charismatic leaders have made use of MacMillan’s concepts and/or writings on the authority of the believer and spiritual warfare as well, including Michael Harper, Don Basham, Dick Leggett, and New Wine magazine. In addition to [direct influence from] MacMillan’s writings . . . other . . . writers influenced by MacMillan have also impacted the charismatic movement. Paul Billheimer’s books and teachings, which . . . are founded in large part by MacMillan’s principles, have been popular among charismatics. Oral Roberts University has used [Billheimer’s] Destined for the Throne in a course on prayer for several years. Billheimer [has] also appeared . . . on the charismat[c] Trinity Broadcasting Network—TBN. Wayne Grudem, now associated with the [charismatic] Vineyard movement, has also been consulted by serious-minded charismatics. Because of the proliferation of current teaching on spiritual warfare, additional leaders could be cited ad infinitum.”

Hagin, Copeland, and other Word of Faith charismatics “extend teaching on the believer’s authority to include such doctrines as transfer and/or abdication of God’s authority, authority to be ‘little gods,’ and authority to command God.” Clearly, through the mediation of John A. MacMillan and the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Keswick continuationism in large part brought forth the Word of Faith theology.

Applications from the Life and Teachings of John A. MacMillan

The writings of John A. MacMillan contain toxic levels of Scripture twisting and dangerous false doctrine, and they undergird numerous charismatic heresies and the soul-damning doctrines of demons in the Word-Faith movement. Members of historic Baptist churches, which properly embrace the truth that sign gifts have ceased, abhor idolatry, and reject fanaticism for a Biblically Spirit-produced spirituality must avoid MacMillan’s writings, beware of his pernicious influence in the works of others, and mark, reprove, and avoid those who propagate his heresies. Reject MacMillan’s throne-power doctrine. Reject and abhor Word of Faith abominations. Reject the Keswick idea that all the blessings of sanctification are solely positional until they are specifically recognized and

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197 Pg. 117, ibid.
claimed. Reject the Higher Life for the soul and the body. Repent, humble yourself, and cry mightily to the Lord for mercy if you have adopted, practiced, or recommended to others the blasphemy that you can command God, either verbally or through the recommendation of literature that teaches this abomination. Submit to God instead of commanding Him, and submit to the Scriptural theocentrism and Bibliocentrism of genuine Christian spirituality—and in so doing reject the shackles that anthropocentric Keswick continuationism seeks to place on the Almighty. Reject MacMillan’s false ideas about spiritual warfare, from the idea of territorial spirits, to the idea that demons can directly place thoughts in your mind, to his dangerous and spiritually detrimental exorcism procedures, and embrace the whole armor of God revealed clearly and sufficiently in Scripture alone, so that you can stand in faith against the devil and his hosts.

The importance of recognizing and exposing MacMillan’s errors is made the more necessary from the fact that, while his influence is greatest in his tutelage of the charismatic and Word of Faith movements, it nevertheless casts its dark shadow far beyond the charismatic sphere. Many evangelicals, some fundamentalists, and some independent Baptists are propagating ideas derived from John A. MacMillan, although many of those spreading his errors have never read anything written by him and would not even recognize his name if asked about it. Misunderstanding and ignorance of Biblical spiritual warfare and Biblical demonology abounds, creating room for the false ideas of men such as MacMillan to take root. Scripture is clear that Satan is very subtle and a master-spreader of deceit. It is incumbent upon faithful under-shepherds to protect their flocks from the depredations of false teachers and the hellish fountain of their doctrines by both plainly warning of error and positively teaching all the truths of the absolutely sufficient Word.

Reject all unbiblical and extra-Scriptural demonology. MacMillan’s writings are teeming with such, since he deviated even further from the truth than his mother in error,

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198 For example, the 2011 “Enthroned Christ” Conference, the 17th annual Holiness Conference at Falls Baptist Church in Menomonee Falls, pastored by Wayne VanGelder, who is on the board of the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship, a church that runs the Baptist College of Ministry and Theological Seminary, despite being avowedly and strongly anti-charismatic, highly recommended John A. MacMillan and essentially designed its entire conference around MacMillan’s theme of throne-life. The conference included the recounting of an exorcism, utilizing the techniques of MacMillan by conversing with and getting the names of sundry demons, by Pastor Rick Savage (message, “Recognizing the Hiss of the Serpent”), himself the pastor of a different fundamental Baptist church that has its own Bible college. From such a conference pastors from around the United States, the vast majority of them entirely ignorant of the theology of the man whose ideas they have imbibed, returned to their churches to spread MacMillan’s ideas and books with their misinterpretations of Scripture, corrupt demonology, and charismatic philosophies into large numbers of separatist Baptist congregations.
Jessie Penn-Lewis. God’s Word is your sole offensive weapon against demons (Ephesians 6:17)—ideas derived from men or from the demons themselves, such as Keswick continuationistic throne-power, are not true offensive weapons, but Trojan horses. Indeed, the Triune God alone sits on His throne and exercises power from thence, so when you usurp His authority and seek to exercise it, you are guilty of idolatry and are doing Satan’s work. Do not employ MacMillan’s techniques of exorcism, or any continuationistic technique of exorcism. Do not ask demons for their names. Do not ask them for anything at all or commune with them in any way whatsoever. Scripture alone is sufficient to perfectly equip you to stand against Satan and his hosts (2 Timothy 3:16-17), so listen to and practice the Bible.

Reject all accounts of missionaries in exotic places, and of all others in what places soever, who allegedly defeated devils utilizing methods that contradict Scriptural cessationistic demonology. The demons are actually in control of these situations, and they want you to adopt the errors they themselves have hatched and propagated through their faked defeat. From John MacMillan’s self-testimony in easily available resources, such as his book The Authority of the Believer, one would conclude that his throne-power teaching “works”—only by digging further, in a manner which the overwhelming majority of MacMillan’s readers will not do, does the practical failure of his doctrine and practice come to light. The simple in the flock of God, if exposed to a book by MacMillan, especially if recommended to them by a trusted source, will proceed to read him devotionally, hear him testify to the effectiveness of his techniques against demons, not even stop to wonder who the man is that they are reading, and adopt many of his errors—yet another reason why it is imperative to reject him and his writings and separate from those who unrepentantly promote his errors. If your only source of information about an encounter with demons is a hagiographical missionary biography, you should recognize that you have no idea what actually happened in the situation—a description by a MacMillan may in fact be the opposite of reality. What is more, you do not need to know, because Scripture is totally sufficient for a true demonology. Uninspired narratives have no authority whatsoever and must not affect your doctrine and practice of spiritual warfare in any way.

Do not follow the CMA in its confusion on the doctrine and praxis of gospel preaching, lest you cross sea and land to make a proselyte who becomes simply a two-fold child of hell. Embrace the blessed truth of the eternal security of the believer and reject the CMA’s Arminianism and the perversion of the gospel that comes with Arminian error. Furthermore, rather than following MacMillan’s example and telling lost people that you are not asking them to repent, but to accept Jesus, follow the example of
the Apostles and tell lost people that they need to repent and believe, while leaving out
the “accept Jesus” terminology and related nonbiblical language, such as asking Jesus to
come into one’s heart, and the equation of the repetition of a sinner’s prayer with
conversion that only confuses the gospel. Do not assume that a lost person understands
the gospel or is saved simply because he can answer “yes” to some leading questions that
you ask him. Poor doctrine and careless personal work with unconverted seekers has
filled evangelicalism with unregenerate people who have confused making an outward
decision with the supernatural new birth. Do not perpetuate this tragedy yourself, and
determine, with God’s help, that you would rather die than allow it to corrupt your
church. Let there not be vast numbers of unregenerate people, people who would have
been saved had you clearly preached the gospel, who will rise up against you in judgment
when you stand before God—rather let those who the Father has saved through the blood
of His Son, the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit, and your concurrent faithful
witness, be a crown of rejoicing to you in the presence of Jesus Christ at His coming (1
Thessalonians 2:19).

Recognize that there are vast numbers of unconverted religious people in
evangelical Higher Life and continuationist circles, in the fanaticism of “deliverance
ministries,” in the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and in Pentecostalism. This fact
explains the presence of widespread demon possession among “Christians” in such
circles. Therefore, you must evangelize such people, giving them the true gospel in a
clear and convicting way, and then call on them to repent, believe, be born again, and
then separate from their false religion to be baptized into a true church of Jesus Christ—a
historic Baptist church. By no means should you either endorse their doctrine and
practice or be in fellowship with them. Do you want Christ to continue to reign as king
over your congregation—a congregation of genuine saints, of those truly born of the
Spirit—until He comes again, or do you want unconverted and demon possessed people
filling your church also?

You would do well to refrain from criticizing the Authorized Version, recognizing
instead that it is a faithful translation of the perfectly preserved Greek and Hebrew Textus
Receptus. However, if you really feel that you must criticize the KJV, beware lest you
find out at the Judgment Seat, if not before, that you really had no idea what you were
talking about, and that you not only were in error yourself, but that you led others who
listened to you away from the truth conveyed in the holy oracles of God. Furthermore,
while it is entirely appropriate to refer to the original languages of Scripture, as Christ
authorized (Matthew 5:18) and the KJV itself does, if you refer to Greek and Hebrew you ought to know the languages well enough to avoid the commission of the hosts of exegetical fallacies so frequently and painfully committed by those who know just enough to be dangerous, but not enough to actually grasp the language. A greater respect for the Authorized Version might have prevented MacMillan from claiming that the Hebrew text describing Moses lifting his rod in Exodus 17 taught something that is by no means present in the chapter, and a greater knowledge of the original languages could have prevented him from claiming what was actually entirely imaginary support for throne-power from the Greek of Ephesians 1-2. Indeed, without these distortions of Scripture, it is possible that MacMillan’s throne-power error would never have arisen to corrupt countless unwary ones in Christendom, as it has done and is continuing to do today. Do not think that exegetical fallacies are a small matter—when you make them, you are sinning grievously against your Lord by perverting His Word. What is more, you have no idea how far your corruption of Scripture may spread and deceive others. Always exercise great care that your exposition of Scripture is in line with the mind of the Holy Ghost who dictated it. Such care will lead you to tremendous respect for the Authorized Version and to great diligence in the proper use of the original languages.

Recognize that the true exercise of Divine power towards and in the believer is far superior to MacMillan’s doctrine of throne-power. A holy life is far better than the gift of exorcism—Judas had the latter, while the vast majority of saints do not—but how infinitely blessed the holy people of God are on the day of judgment! Christ specifically told those to whom He had given miraculous gifts: “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:19-20). Christ has not given you miraculous sign gifts—but what need are they, if your name is written in heaven? “All things work together for good to them that love God” (Romans 8:28)—so all the works of God towards you, both His withholding of miraculous gifts and His positive providential guidance in your life, are for His glory and your good. What more can you desire than that your loving heavenly Father works everything together for your good? Has He not given you the greatest good of all—the very Son of His love—and with Him will He not surely give you all things? Will it not be your glory to all eternity to be conformed to the image of His Son? After billions of years in the New Jerusalem, after Satan has been cast into the lake of fire forever, it will not matter

199 Compare the marginal notes in Mark 13:8; Luke 16:6-7, etc.
whether or not you had the gift of exorcism, but your use of the gifts God did give you in
your earthly pilgrimage will have continuing, indeed, eternal value. You will have more
or less reward to cast at Jesus’ feet, more or less glory you can return to your infinitely
blessed and precious Redeemer, based on your faithfulness as a steward now. What,
then, are the sign gifts in comparison to the inestimable blessing—and absolutely
supernatural gift of grace—of holiness?

Consider also Paul’s blessed words in his first epistle to the Corinthians:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am becom
as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all
mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and
have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I
give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. . . . Charity never faileth:
but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease;
whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. . . . And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these
three; but the greatest of these is charity. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 8, 13)

Rather than seeking to be filled with miraculous gifts that passed away in the first
century, be filled with love, for love is greater than all the sign gifts. If you are full of
love to God and man, you are infinitely better off than if you are filled with
continuationist doctrines and go around babbling and trying to predict the future. Rather
than seeking after gifts that God has never promised you, behold in the Word the eternal
love of your Father, the love of the Son as your Mediator, and the love of the Spirit in
revealing and applying to your heart the infinite Divine love of the Trinity. After all, a
complete Word is better than all sign gifts—they are the imperfect which passes away
when the perfect has come, the childish things that are unneeded now that maturity and a
completed canon has come (1 Corinthians 13:8-13). Sign gifts, alleged throne-power,
and exorcism sessions may be more flashy and startling than day-by-day gradual growth
in holiness through a complete Word, but the latter is indubitably superior—far, far
superior—to the former. The supernatural efficacy of the Spirit in progressively
eradicating indwelling sin and transforming you into the image of the Son of the Father’s
love is a greater work, and one with vastly more eternal value, than the temporary
benefits that accrue to one from his body being healed or some other temporal miracle
taking place. Manifest, then, your love in practical acts of charity to the brethren and in
sweet and intimate communion with your God. Show your love for the lost by
proclaiming the dying love of Christ to them and passionately urging them to be
reconciled to God. In so doing you will not only glorify God in a far greater way than
you would by performing miraculous signs, but you will also be kept from temptation
and the power of the devil in a way that a Keswick or charismatic doctrine of throne-
power cannot—for if you are filled up with the love of Christ, your heart will be sweetly
constrained towards Him and consecrated to Him, and you will walk in His ways, the wiles of the Tempter having but little power.

Behold and rejoice in the glory of the God in the defeat of Satan and his hosts, and trust in He who has this victory so certainly in His hands. The destruction of the devil and his demons has been decreed by God from eternity, and is as certain as Jehovah is the Almighty—indeed, God always ultimately overrules the purposes of the devil to bring about His greater glory and the greater good. The defeat of Satan and the sin that entered the world through his temptation was proclaimed in the first promise of the Redeemer in the *protoevangelium* (Genesis 3:15). Every animal sacrifice offered in the Old Testament pointed forward to the cross and the victory over sin and Satan accomplished there. The book of Job demonstrates that whatever evil the Tempter wreaks is under the sovereign control and limitation of the Almighty and is to accomplish His ultimate purposes (Job 1:8, 12; 2:3, 6)—the creation belongs to Jehovah, not to Satan, and the rage of the prince of rebels is constrained within the bounds set by the Sovereign One. Whenever Satan tempts you, or his devils rage against you, remember that the worst of their actions is within the permitting providence of your heavenly Father, and, clad in the armor of God, trust in Him and stand fast against the evil one.

See the victory over the devil wrought out by the Son of God. See Jesus Christ overcoming temptation in the wilderness, the second Adam spotlessly overcoming temptations far more severe than those which brought the fall of the first. See Him casting out devils, demonstrating His Messiahship and His absolute and utter sovereignty over the kingdom of darkness as a stronger than that demonic strong man. See Satan’s hour and the power of darkness turned into glorious victory as you view the cross in light of the empty tomb. See Christ’s ascension into heaven, far above all the principalities and powers of darkness, and His rule over the church and the world from the Father’s right hand. See His tender care throughout the dispensation of grace for His bride, the church, and His protection of His spouse from the raging of that roaring lion who wishes, but in vain, to devour her. See His second coming to catch all His saints up to be with Him at the commencement of the seventieth week of Daniel—neither Satan, nor that last enemy, death, can stop the resurrection of even the least of Christ’s precious blood-bought ones. See His enactment of the judgments of the Tribulation period upon the wicked who are left behind, and recognize that the rise of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and the rule invested in these paragons of Satanic power, are only a result of the opening of the scroll of judgment by the crucified, risen, and reigning Lamb. See the return of Christ in glory upon a white horse to establish His Millennial kingdom, destroy the armies of the Antichrist, cast that wicked one into the lake of fire, and bind Satan and
his hosts. Anticipate and savor the glory of the Millennial reign of Christ over a world free from the influence of fallen angels—a world where Satan is bound in truth. See Satan’s defeat at the time of his final loosing and gathering of the unregenerate against God, and Christ’s casting the devil and all his seed into the lake of fire to be tormented for ever and ever, and say in your heart, “Amen—even so, come, Lord Jesus!” From the perspective of the New Jerusalem, survey the entirety of redemptive history and see your God using the devil for His own ultimate good purpose, so that through it all He receives the more glory, and sing the praises of that glorious Victor over all the might of that fallen angel and his armies. Finally, rejoice also that the Triune Jehovah is your very own God, and as a perfectly strong refuge and Rock, He can, and will, keep His own ultimately safe from Satan’s power, as He is able to, without the least exertion or weariness, ultimately rout the strongest efforts of all the devils and their tyrannical king together. Recognize and hide all these things in your heart, oh child of God—and live for your Lord, fighting the good fight against sin and Satan, in light of these blessed, glorious, and exceedingly comforting realities.