

KENNETH COPELAND

THE
POWER
TO BE FOREVER
FREE

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PUBLICATIONS

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture is from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

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The Power to Be Forever Free

“Disciplining the flesh.” For many believers that phrase stirs memories of frustration and failure. They know it’s important—the Word of God clearly teaches that. But they’re not sure exactly how to go about it.

Some have given up, shrugging off such discipline as impossible. Others are still fighting stubbornly to get their flesh under control and losing one battle after another.

But it doesn’t have to be that way. In fact, we can’t afford to let it be that way. It will cost us too much! You and I are blessed to be part of the generation that will see the signs and wonders that the prophets of old

wished they could have lived long enough to see. We will witness the Spirit of God poured out upon all flesh. But sin obstructs the Spirit's flow. And only as we rid ourselves of it will the power and glory of God be manifest through us. Only then will we experience the wonderful things that are prophesied to take place in our generation.

But is it really possible to step out of the sin you've struggled with so long—and live under the Spirit's control? Yes, it is! And the Word of God will show you how.

Hebrews 12:1-3 provides the key:

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily

beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Notice that this scripture doesn't just say to lay aside the weight and sin which so easily besets us. It says to look to Jesus. But how can you look to someone you can't see?

I did my best to look to the Lord the first five years I was born again, but I wanted to see Him with my natural

eyes. I thought that if I could just see Jesus in person, I could surely get rid of all the junk in my life. That would have been glorious, but it didn't happen that way.

Then one day I saw Him in the Word. Oh, praise God! Now I know how to look to Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, to help me to discipline myself. Actually, I discovered it quite by accident when Jesus delivered me from smoking.

When I was first born again, I was dominated by a horrible smoking habit. I tried to quit every way I could think of. I threw away so many full and nearly full packs of cigarettes while I was driving down the road, it seemed I threw away more than I smoked! But that didn't work. I'd just turn my car around and go back and get them.

My deliverance came as I was

attending some meetings in Hilton Sutton's church in Houston, Texas. I had more respect for the preachers than to smoke in their presence, so I tucked my cigarettes in the sun visor of the car and left them there.

At that time I had been a Christian for quite awhile, but I didn't know anything about the Word and had never been exposed to the power of God. When they started preaching under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, it held my attention. I was caught up in the living Word. My desires changed. All I wanted was more of God. For the first time in my life, the Scriptures came alive.

Brother Sutton preached on the second coming of Jesus, and I got really "high" on it. Suddenly I could hardly stand all the things that were wrong in my life. What happened? The Word replaced the desire to

smoke. When those meetings ended and I started driving back home, I found those old, stale cigarettes tucked up in my sun visor and realized I hadn't even missed them!

I learned that the living Word of Almighty God is the only power that can cause me to think, look, talk and act like a born-again man. It's the only thing that can empower me to discipline this flesh of mine. When I saw Jesus in the Word, I was totally set free, not only of the habit, but of the desire!

It has not always been this way, though. I remember when the devil first entered my life. It seemed like such a small temptation to begin with, but it grew into a stronghold of the devil that nearly destroyed me. One afternoon as a 9-year-old boy, I just yielded to the temptation to "cuss." I knew better, but I did it

anyway. I had a relative who was so good at West Texas “cussin,” that I thought he invented it! I was intrigued, and I wanted to try it.

When I let go of all restraint and began to say those cuss words, something evil moved in on my thinking that seriously affected me for nearly 20 years. Satan captured my mind that day and set a law in motion. My flesh gradually became boss over my entire being. By the age of 20, I was almost 100 pounds overweight and headed for destruction. A spiritual, scriptural illiterate, I was totally out of control and couldn’t stop it.

I didn’t know it at the time, but now I realize that Satan used a very subtle strategy—lasciviousness—to take control of my life. The word means “having no restraint.”

Lasciviousness has been preached as being extreme immorality, but it

doesn't start out that way. It begins with just a few seemingly innocent thoughts. Then those thoughts grow and grow until they begin to produce serious sin.

Lasciviousness comes wrapped in many different packages, but they all have the same result—destruction. The wages of sin is death. All sin is selfishness tied with a different bow. Sex sins, gluttony, etc., all stem from the “big me” and the result is the same. Satan only comes to steal, kill and destroy.

Ephesians 4:17-19 gives us some insight into the nature of lasciviousness:

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being

alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Gentile in this context is a spiritual term meaning “without God.” As Christians, born of His Spirit, we have His divine nature. Paul admonishes us to no longer live as though we were without God. We are to be controlled by our spirits, which are re-created in His image, and not dominated by our carnal minds. You see, your natural mind is in enmity against God. But your spirit, if you are born again, is in harmony with Jesus. Satan uses lasciviousness to apply pressure to your flesh so it will dominate your spirit and separate you from God.

Notice that Paul said, “*Who being past feeling....*” This means “to be dead to shame” or “to have the conscience seared until it is no longer effective.” Satan’s ultimate goal through lasciviousness is to cause you to live exactly like the rest of the world lives. Even though you may be born again and filled with the Spirit, he wants you to be guided by the vanity of your mind, separated from the nature of God which is in you.

The mind is the ground for Satan’s seed. Second Corinthians 10:4-5 tells us how to keep his seed from taking root.

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,

and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Obedience to Christ and obedience to the Word are synonymous because Jesus is the Word.

If your mind is not renewed to God's Word, you will never be totally free of lasciviousness. It starts with having no restraint, first to thoughts which come innocently enough but result in throwing you totally out of control. For example, "Well, I know I shouldn't eat that, but just a little won't hurt." Oh really? You just swallowed the seed of your own destruction. You rationalized and thought, *Oh well, it's just a little*. But it never stops there. It grows until you find yourself exercising no restraint whatsoever.

The process is the same with every type of sin. Satan doesn't just blare out something like, *Why don't you kill someone today?* No! The devil is more subtle than that. He plants a tiny seed which grows into bigger and bigger things. Before he can drive someone to commit murder, he's got to get them to entertain thoughts of unforgiveness, resentment and revenge. They start out so small that you don't pay attention to them, but they grow.

Lasciviousness finally erodes the life of the born-again believer until he appears to be no different from an unregenerate man. The devil uses it to get him to think like the world thinks so that eventually he will act like the world acts. Carnal thoughts produce carnal actions. Jesus said:

O generation of vipers, how

can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned (Matthew 12:34-37).

You will speak and produce exactly what you have in your heart—either for good or evil. If your mind is filled with carnality, the only way you will become free is to change what you think.

Control your thoughts by bringing

them into obedience to the Scriptures. Program your mind to the Word of God. If you don't, you will be leaving yourself open to lasciviousness. Once the seed of it is planted, it will mature. Before long, you will be saying and doing things you know you shouldn't. Unrestrained thoughts result in unrestrained actions. So put a stop to them quickly by looking to Jesus.

Did you ever notice how easy it is to control your thoughts when you are in a Believers' Convention or in church? That's because in a spiritual atmosphere of the Word and praise and worship, your spirit becomes the dominating force. If you will gauge your whole life around spiritual activities, your inner man can be in control all the time. Galatians 5:16 says that if you walk in the spirit, you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. You see, you can't do two things at once. If you're walking in the spirit, your flesh has to come in line.

You will change what you think as you look to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. Keep your mind and heart fixed on the Word—on Jesus. He is the only One who can help you overcome. The Word is spirit and it is life. When your mind is totally saturated with the Word of God, your spirit will exercise its authority to overcome every ungodly thought and evil habit.

A few years ago someone said to me, “Boy, Brother Copeland, you sure have lost a lot of weight!” I said, “No, I didn’t. I stopped lasciviousness from operating in my life, and the weight took care of itself.” I took my attention off myself and got it on Jesus.

Your victory will come in the same way. As you live in harmony with Jesus, you’ll turn your back on the lusts of the flesh. So, if sin has got you in a stronghold, break loose by getting

your mind off yourself and looking to Jesus! You can't do two things at the same time. If you turn toward Him, you'll leave that sin behind you!

But you must be determined to fulfill God's Word at any price. Don't compromise. Boldly believe and act on the Word, and your flesh will submit to the control of the Holy Spirit.

Don't let Satan deceive you into sacrificing the glory of God in your life for a few moments of self-indulgence and sin. Restrain your thought life! Meditate the Word instead of selfish, carnal thoughts! Keep your eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. He's given you the power to be forever free!

Prayer for Salvation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Heavenly Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. Your Word says, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21). I am calling on You. I pray and ask Jesus to come into my heart and be Lord over my life according to Romans 10:9-10: “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” I do that now. I confess that Jesus is Lord, and I believe in my heart that God raised Him from the dead.

I am now reborn! I am a Christian—a child of Almighty God! I am saved! You also said in Your Word, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: HOW MUCH MORE shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:13). I’m also asking You to fill me with the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, rise up within me as I praise God. I fully expect to speak with other tongues as You give me the utterance

(Acts 2:4). In Jesus' Name. Amen!

Begin to praise God for filling you with the Holy Spirit. Speak those words and syllables you receive—not in your own language, but the language given to you by the Holy Spirit. You have to use your own voice. God will not force you to speak. Don't be concerned with how it sounds. It is a heavenly language!

Continue with the blessing God has given you and pray in the spirit every day.

You are a born-again, Spirit-filled believer. You'll never be the same!

Find a good church that boldly preaches God's Word and obeys it. Become part of a church family who will love and care for you as you love and care for them.

We need to be connected to each other. It increases our strength in God. It's God's plan for us.

Make it a habit to watch the *Believer's Voice of Victory* television broadcast and become a doer of the Word, who is blessed in his doing (James 1:22-25).

About the Author

Kenneth Copeland is co-founder and president of Kenneth Copeland Ministries in Fort Worth, Texas, and best-selling author of books that include *How to Discipline Your Flesh* and *Honor—Walking in Honesty, Truth and Integrity*.

Since 1967, Kenneth has been a minister of the gospel of Christ and teacher of God's Word. He is also the artist on award-winning albums such as his Grammy-nominated *Only the Redeemed*, *In His Presence*, *He Is Jehovah*, *Just a Closer Walk* and his most recently released *Big Band Gospel* album. He also co-stars as the character Wichita Slim in the children's adventure videos *The Gunslinger*, *Covenant Rider* and the movie *The Treasure of Eagle Mountain*, and as Daniel Lyon in the *Commander Kellie and the SuperkidsTM* videos *Armor of Light* and *Judgment: The Trial of Commander Kellie*. Kenneth also co-stars as a Hispanic godfather in the 2009 movie *The Rally*.

With the help of offices and staff in the United States, Canada, England, Australia, South Africa, Ukraine and Singapore, Kenneth is fulfilling his vision to boldly preach the uncompromised WORD of God from the top of this world, to the bottom, and all the way around. His ministry reaches millions of people worldwide through daily and Sunday TV broadcasts, magazines, teaching audios and videos, conventions and campaigns, and the World Wide Web.

Learn more about Kenneth Copeland Ministries
by visiting our website at **kcm.org**

Believer's Voice of

VICTORY



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Jesus Is LORD!

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