

Bethel Response

Bethel is a church pastored by Bill Johnson in Redding, CA. Their website describes them as “a community of worshippers...We exist to ignite individual hearts until Heaven meets Earth. We gather to encounter God’s presence, where personal revival starts.” Bethel, the church, as well as its leaders, have received much scrutiny ranging from non-believers to high-profile Pastors across the world. This document aims to provide insight and clarity to some of these criticisms.

Bethel and “Kenosis”

- Kenosis is defined as the renunciation of the divine nature, at least in part, by Christ in the Incarnation
- **The Lie:** Bethel teaches that Jesus *was not God on earth*
- **The Response:** People have exaggerated Bill Johnson teaching that Jesus did not operate in His divine power on earth, but He operated in the power of the Holy Spirit to set an example for us to follow. Bethel does believe that He was 100% God, and 100% man.

Bethel and “Dominionism”

- Dominionism is defined as the theory or doctrine that Christians have a mandate to assume positions of power and influence over all aspects of society and government
- **The Lie:** Bethel believes we should take over, in a militant fashion, all of the seven mountains of influence (Lance Wallnau and Bill Johnson, *Invading Babylon: The 7 Mountain Mandate*)
- **The Response:** This is an exaggeration. Bethel teaches that we are to be an influence in every mountain of influence on the planet through the love of Jesus.

Bethel and “You can learn Spiritual Gifts”

- **The Lie:** You can learn Spiritual Gifts
- **The Response:** Bethel does not teach that you can learn Spiritual Gifts, but that you can learn to operate in Spiritual Gifts. That is why they offer the training within those gifts.
 - **School of the Prophets:** There are 21 references in the Old Testament to schools of the prophets
 - **Spiritual Gifts:** They are/can be imparted to others by the laying on of hands
 - Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership
 - 1 Timothy 4:14 –

Bethel and “Repentance”

- **The Lie:** Bethel teaches a different repentance.
- **The Response:** Bill Johnson, Kris Vallotton, and other teachers at Bethel teach on repentance, and their teaching is turning away from sin and turning to God and His ways

Bethel and “The Sneaky Blue Genie”

- Years ago, Jenn Johnson (Bill’s wife) used an analogy of the Holy Spirit being like the genie from Aladdin.
- **The Response:** This was a bad analogy, and one she no longer uses. Bill Johnson himself admitted it was a bad analogy and they do not think that the Holy Spirit is a genie.

Bethel and “Grave Sucking”

- Grave sucking is a term that was coined to describe the act of people laying on the graves of men and women of God that have died in order to receive their anointing
- **The Response:** This is a practice straight from witchcraft and has been publicly denounced by Bill Johnson who went on to say this has never been taught or supported by anyone at Bethel.
- Some students from Bethel did this (apparent grave sucking) and posted it on social media
- The leadership at the Bethel School of Supernatural Ministries has corrected it.
- The lie was tied to Bill Johnson’s wife because they visited a gravesite and her picture was taken while she was on the grave.
- Bill Johnson addresses sin, grave sucking, and the sneaky blue genie controversy in an interview with Dr. Michael Brown:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLD161Zj3j4&feature=youtu.be>

Bethel and “Christian Tarot Card Reading”

- Another exaggeration and attempt to tie something to Bethel that is not related to them
- Bethel’s response to this topic: <https://www.bethel.com/about/christalignment/>

Bethel and “New Apostolic Reformation” (NAR)

- **The Lie:** It is a secret organization of charismatic, false teachers, who are taking over the world.
- There is a list of heresies or different theological foundations that cessationists have compiled that are legitimate heresies, or their difference of opinion on Scripture.

- This group then states that certain charismatic Christian leaders are part of this group and teach these heresies.
- These leaders deny being part of NAR because it is secret.
- **The Response:** There is no such thing as NAR.
- None of the charismatic leaders believe or teach these heresies.
- There are differing views of God from these two camps.
- **Cessation:** teaches that...
 - All miracles, healings, casting out of unclean spirits, and signs and wonders ceased with the original Apostles
 - Baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for today
 - Speaking in tongues no longer happens
 - And any who teaches that they did not stop but are for today, are false teachers or false prophets
- **People Who Perpetuate this Lie:**
 - Have a reformed theology
 - Comes from John Calvin
 - Refute all things supernatural
- Dr. Michael Brown answers questions about NAR and Pastor Bill Johnson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqW2xbs-MeM&feature=youtu.be>

Where We Differ with Cessationism

- **Cessationists do not believe in...**
 - Baptism in the Holy Spirit
 - Speaking in tongues
 - Gifts of the Spirit are for today
 - Healing is for today
 - Prophetic ministry is for today
 - Our words have supernatural power
 - Deliverance from unclean spirits
 - Raising the dead
- **We DO Believe in...**
 - Baptism in the Holy Spirit (**Acts 19:2**)
 - Speaking in tongues (**1 Corinthians 14:18**)
 - Gifts of the Spirit are for today
 - Healing is for today (**Matthew 10:8**)
 - Prophetic ministry is for today (**1 Corinthians 14:31**)
 - Our words have supernatural power (**Proverbs 18:20-21** and **Romans 10:8-10**). This Scripture is about salvation, but the word salvation here is the word *soteria*, which means salvation from danger, deliverance, welfare, prosperity, and victory. As we confess God's word (which is Jesus) over our lives, we have *soteria*.

- Deliverance from unclean spirits (Look at Jesus' ministry and see that He cast out evil spirits all the time)
- Raising the dead (Again, part of the body of Christ does not believe that this is even possible. However, there is clear direction from the Scripture that we are to do it)
 - Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give – Matthew 10:8 –