

Decree and declare

Inhoud

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Introduction:

In some circles, to “decree and declare” something is to powerfully speak it into existence. This phraseology has Pentecostal/Charismatic roots and is much like the “positive confession” teaching. Those involved in the “decree and declare” movement claim that if someone decrees or declares something, then it will happen. To “declare” is to state (out loud) a fact; to “decree” is to issue an authoritative command. Kenneth Hagin, a leader in the Word of Faith movement, writes, “You can have whatever you say. . . . You always get in your life what you believe for and what you say” (“You Can Have What you Say,” hopefaithprayer.com, Lesson 25, accessed 3/31/20).

The “decree and declare” movement claims to be biblical by using scriptural support. Since mankind is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), then, the thinking goes, we, like God, can speak and make things happen. God spoke things into existence (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24, 26), so those with faith can do the same. Those who follow the “decree and declare” formula make such statements as “I decree and declare that I will be healed from my sickness” or “I decree and declare my family will be healthy and well provided for.” Often, asking God for things in prayer is replaced by decreeing those things to happen.

It’s true that mankind is made in the image of God; however, the “decree and declare” proponents are wrong in the practical applications of that truth. Being made in the image of God does not mean that we have the same abilities that God has. Being made in the image of God means that “humans share, though imperfectly and finitely, in God’s nature, that is, in His communicable attributes (life, personality, truth, wisdom, love, holiness, justice), and so have the capacity for spiritual fellowship with Him” (Allen P. Ross, Bible Knowledge Commentary: Genesis, ed. by John Walvoord and Roy Zuck, David C. Cook, 1989, p. 29). Being made in the image of God means that we reflect God’s attributes, not that we can do the things that only God can, such as speak things into existence.

Someone who has been taught to “decree and declare” might say something like this before taking a road trip: “I decree and declare God’s blessings on this vehicle, that it will remain mechanically sound!” In saying that, the speaker may truly believe that his verbal declaration, coupled with God’s

power and authority within him, will guarantee a trouble-free trip. The problem is, our statements can be declarative, but not causative, no matter how true they are; plus, when we go around “decreeing” things, we are in danger of putting our will over God’s will. Jesus taught us to pray that God’s will be done, and He led by example (Luke 11:2; 22:42).

Whether practitioners of the “decree and declare” formula realize it or not, the ritualistic vocalizing of those words has similarities to magical incantations. According to the dictionary, an incantation is “a written or recited formula of words designed to produce a particular effect” (merriam-webster.com, accessed 3/31/20). The “decree and declare” teaching says that there is something special—something powerful—associated with our thoughts and words. We can think of something and “declare” it, and that in itself will change our circumstances and bring us blessings, including prosperity and healing. There’s nothing biblical about using certain words to manipulate events to bring something to pass. Instead of praying to the Lord for healing or other needs according to His will, followers of the Word of Faith movement are taught to repeat the “decree and declare” formula in the belief that their positivity will bring about positive results.

Instead of reciting formulaic declarations to obtain something, we should pray to the Lord in submission to His will (Matthew 26:42). Instead of seeking to force God’s hand by calling forth whatever we want, Christians should trust in the Heavenly Father who “knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!” (Matthew 6:8, NLT).

Some bible verses used by the “decree and declare”:

Job 22:28

You will also declare a thing, And it will be established for you; So light will shine on your ways.

Explanation of Job 22:28

Job’s three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, have historically been known for offering lengthy speeches that resulted in their being condemned by God (Job 42:7–9). At one point Job, weary of their unhelpful rhetoric, told them, “You are miserable comforters, all of you!”

Job 42:7 “And so it was, after the Lord had spoken these words to Job, that the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.”

The answer of Eliphaz wrongly implied that Job had hitherto not known God, and that prosperity in this life would follow his sincere conversion. The counsel Eliphaz here gives is good, though, as to Job, it was built upon a false supposition that he was a stranger and enemy to God. Let us beware of slandering our brethren; and if it be our lot to suffer in this manner, let us remember how Job was treated; yea, how Jesus was reviled, that we may be patient. Let us examine whether there may not be some colour for the slander, and walk watchfully, so as to be clear of all appearances of evil.

However, Job’s friends did at least three things right that can be seen in Job 2:11–13. First, they came to him when he was suffering. Second, they empathized with him: “they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads” (verse 12). Third, they spent time with him. Verse 13 states they were with him for seven days before they offered their advice. They commiserated with their friend in silence.

But their silence did not last forever, and these three men gave a series of speeches to Job, recorded in chapters 4–25. The speeches of Job’s three friends include many inaccuracies, primarily involving why God allows people to suffer. Their overarching belief was that Job was suffering because he had

done something wrong. As a result, they repeatedly encourage Job to admit his wrong and repent so that God would bless him again.

This verse, in context, does not give us the powers to decree and declare at all. On the contrary when you read the whole chapter and put this into context. Job 42:7,8 are very clear what God thinks when we use this verse out of context... and its terrifying to see what God says about that:

Job 42:7 And so it was, after the Lord had spoken these words to Job, that the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. 8 Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has."

[Romans 4:17](#)

(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

[Explanation of Romans 4:17](#)

Romans 4:17 is often abused to teach the name-it-claim-it doctrine. According to this false doctrine, we can speak God's Word over our finances, our bodies, our automobiles, etc., and see miraculous results to our benefit. All we need is a "confession" and enough faith, and God will transform the physical realm into an environment of blessing. We can "speak those things that are not as though they are," sit back, and enjoy the fruit of our words.

Romans 4:17 is not(!) remotely about the power of our words; it is about the power of God's promises and His faithfulness to keep those promises. Isaac, the son of promise, was not born because Abraham "confessed" or "declared" certain words but because God promised he would be.

The context of Romans 4 is salvation by faith. Paul uses the example of the patriarch Abraham to show how our relationship with God is based on faith and not the works of the Law. Romans 4:17 states, "As it is written: 'I have made you a father of many nations.' [Abraham] is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not."

So, this is about patriarch Abraham and not about us, let alone that we can use this verse in a general way to declare things that are not. That's the context.

Abraham heard God's promise and believed it. That faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness (Genesis 15:6) and provides the example of all who would later exercise faith in God (Romans 4:11). Looking into the future, God can speak of things that do not exist as if they do exist. God has power over death and the ability to create life. Abraham believed this, and so do we, if we are spiritual descendants of Abraham (see Galatians 3:29).

[Resources:](#)

MacArthur Study Bible

Gotquestions.org

Fighting for the Faith (Why Decreeing and Declaring is NOT Prayer)

THE BEAT by Allen Parr (Should Christians DECREE and DECLARE Things in Prayer?)

Melissa Dougherty (Mike Winger Vs. Kenneth Copeland on Romans 4:17)