

RHEMA, FRED PRICE, AND THE INTER-RACIAL MARRIAGE CONTROVERSY

Statement, fallout, public response, later contact, and accountability questions

Purpose

This brief separates reported facts, source limits, and unresolved questions. It does not accuse any person of present misconduct or assign individual responsibility for historical statements.

UPDATED PUBLIC-SOURCE REVIEW | JUNE 24, 2026

Created by Oklahoma Child Wellbeing. This is a research and accountability document based on public reporting, publicly posted materials, and a supplied clipping. It is not a legal finding, doctrinal ruling, or allegation of criminal conduct.

Executive Summary

What the review supports. Public reporting from 1998-2000 describes a rupture between Rev. Kenneth W. Hagin and Rev. Frederick K. C. Price after a recorded sermon attributed to Hagin was reported to contain advice opposing interracial dating or marriage. Price, a major Black Word of Faith leader with longstanding ties to Kenneth E. Hagin Sr. and Rhema, publicly challenged the teaching after attempts at private engagement. Contemporary reporting also describes a reported apology by Hagin, Price’s view that the response did not amount to a clear recantation, and serious ministry fallout.

What the review does not establish. The reviewed sources do not establish a complete institutional record. The original full sermon, all letters, board minutes, internal policies, and any contemporaneous Rhema press statement were not located. Absence from the sources reviewed is not proof that a document or response never existed.

Why this remains relevant. Later public statements and ministry contact indicate that the relationship between the Hagin and Price communities evolved over time. They do not, by themselves, establish that the original theological teaching was fully repudiated in a public institutional process. Current accountability questions should focus on documented policy, governance, pastoral training, hiring safeguards, and whether members can obtain clear answers.

Key Findings at a Glance

Finding	Source-based significance
Early-1990s sermon / reported remarks	A supplied clipping and 1998 reporting describe remarks attributed to Hagin opposing interracial dating or marriage. Reporting differs on the precise recording date; the original recording is needed to settle chronology.
Private dispute before public rupture	Public reporting describes Price seeking an explanation or correction before the issue became widely public.
Reported apology; continuing disagreement	Hagin reportedly apologized. Price publicly maintained that the response did not fully reject the underlying teaching.
Documented institutional fallout	1999 reporting describes a boycott of Hagin materials and support by Price, plus resignations by Black ministers from a board connected to Price’s organization.
Later public messages and contact	Rhema publicly posted anti-racism language in 2020. In 2023, Kenneth W. Hagin preached at Crenshaw Christian Center and presented a reported \$50,000 gift. These later events are context, not proof of a complete resolution.

Documented and Reported Timeline

- **Early 1990s - reported sermon date is not fully settled:** The supplied clipping and later accounts describe a sermon attributed to Hagin addressing interracial dating/marriage. One public account references a 1993 sermon; another secondary account describes Black ministers taking tapes to Price in 1992. This brief treats the exact date as unresolved pending the original audio and provenance.
- **1998 - controversy becomes widely public:** The Los Angeles Times reported that the controversy involved Hagin’s earlier remarks and that Price’s response was drawing attention to racism in church settings. The article reported that Hagin wrote that he had apologized to his church and tried to apologize to Price.
- **1999 - reported fallout expands:** A Los Angeles Times report described Price removing Hagin materials from the church bookstore, ending financial support, and removing Kenneth E. Hagin Sr.’s name from a building. It also reported resignations by Black ministers from an executive board of one of Price’s organizations.

- **2000 - retrospective discussion of backlash:** Charisma's retrospective reported that Price continued to describe the matter as painful and that his anti-racism stance generated backlash. The article also notes the dispute's place in his broader public campaign against racism in Christianity.
- **2020 - later public message from Rhema:** Rhema Bible Church publicly posted a video titled, "Racism is real and it must be eradicated!" The accessible record identifies it as a word from Pastor Kenneth W. Hagin. The post should not be represented as a specific 1990s recantation unless the full recording expressly connects it to that controversy.
- **2023 - later contact with Crenshaw Christian Center:** The Los Angeles Sentinel reported that Kenneth W. Hagin preached at Crenshaw Christian Center's 50th anniversary and presented Dr. Frederick K. Price with a \$50,000 check. The event may show later cooperation or relationship repair; it does not independently prove the terms of any historical resolution.

The Reported Statement and Why It Became Controversial

The supplied newspaper clipping states that Kenneth Hagin Jr. of Rhema Bible Church in Tulsa advised an integrated congregation on avoiding interracial dating. The clipping attributes language to him including: "We're friends. We play. We go together as a group. But we don't date one another," and a personal opinion that races should not mix. The clipping appears to place the remarks within a national article on religious opposition to interracial marriage.

Context and source caution. This brief treats the clipping as a record of what the newspaper reported, not as a substitute for the original full sermon. A full audio copy, date, sermon title, complete transcript, and any surrounding pastoral explanation should be obtained before treating any excerpt as complete context.

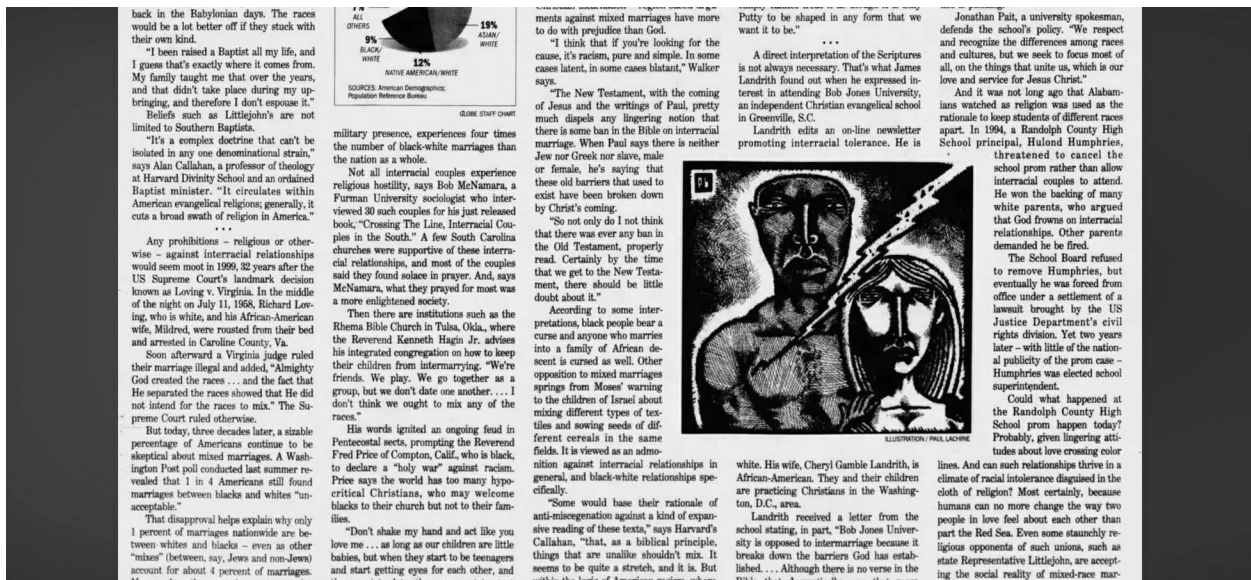


Figure 1. Supplied clipping from a national newspaper article on religious opposition to interracial marriage. The clip attributes the quoted remarks to Kenneth Hagin Jr. Publication name/date are not fully visible in the supplied image; independent archival verification is recommended.

Why Fred Price's Response Carried Particular Weight

Price was not simply an outside commentator. Public ministry materials and reporting describe his longstanding connection to the broader Word of Faith movement and to Kenneth E. Hagin Sr.'s teaching. That background made the conflict meaningful to both communities: it involved doctrine, pastoral witness, racial justice, ministry partnership, and the credibility of a movement whose leaders had shared platforms and audiences.

The 1998 Los Angeles Times reporting said Price had attempted to address the issue before the public break. It also reported that Hagin and Price declined to comment directly to the newspaper at that time. The most supportable framing is that Price viewed the matter as sufficiently serious to require a public response after private efforts did not produce a response he considered adequate.

Apology, Retraction, and the Unresolved Dispute

The 1998 Los Angeles Times reported that Hagin wrote to supporters that he had apologized to his church and tried to apologize to Price. The paper quoted a portion of the reported letter: “If I could take the words back, I would ... but I can’t.”

Price’s public position, as later summarized in reporting, was that an apology for the hurt caused was not the same as a clear rejection of the theological position he believed the remarks reflected. That distinction is central: the dispute was not only over tone or offense, but over whether the underlying doctrine opposing interracial marriage or dating had been expressly repudiated.

Fair framing: the historical record located supports a reported apology and a continuing disagreement about whether the response constituted a full recantation. It does not permit this brief to state conclusively that no additional private reconciliation, pastoral correction, or institutional action occurred.

Fallout and Community Backlash

The most concrete reported fallout found in this review appears in a 1999 Los Angeles Times article. The paper reported that Price withdrew Hagin materials from his church bookstore, stopped financial support, and removed Kenneth E. Hagin Sr.’s name from a building. It further reported that half of the African American ministers on the executive board of one of Price’s organizations resigned in protest of those steps.

Charisma’s 2000 retrospective reported that Price described continuing pain and backlash after his public anti-racism campaign. This is relevant because it documents that speaking against racial hierarchy or segregationist ideas in church environments carried relationship and institutional consequences. The reviewed sources do not quantify the backlash, establish a coordinated campaign, or prove financial effects beyond the reported ministry actions.

Public Relations, Institutional Response, and What Has Not Been Located

The reviewed record reflects several distinct forms of response: reported personal apology, reported private communication with supporters, later public anti-racism language, and later ministry contact with Price’s church community. These should not be collapsed into one claim of institutional resolution.

Question	Located in the reviewed record?	Interpretation limit
Reported apology by Hagin	Yes - reported by the Los Angeles Times in 1998.	The full original letter and complete wording should be obtained.
Public institutional statement by Rhema during the 1998-1999 dispute	Not located in sources reviewed.	Absence from reviewed sources does not prove no statement existed.
Formal board review, staff action, or policy correction	Not located in sources reviewed.	Internal records may exist and should be requested or archived.
Later broad anti-racism message from Rhema	Yes - 2020 Rhema Facebook post.	Not established as a specific response to the original controversy.
Later public contact with the Price / Crenshaw community	Yes - 2023 Los Angeles Sentinel report.	Does not establish the content of reconciliation or whether every concern was resolved.

Leadership and Hiring: Evidence-Based Accountability Questions

This review does not infer that any present or former individual staff member caused, endorsed, or is responsible for the historical controversy. It also does not treat the employment or private legal history of any individual as evidence of racial bias. The appropriate questions are institutional and documented.

- What written nondiscrimination, equal-employment, or anti-harassment policies governed pastoral and staff hiring during the 1990s, and what policies govern today?
- What review process applies when a senior leader makes a public theological statement that could affect racial inclusion, pastoral care, dating or marriage counseling, student experience, or staff trust?
- Were Black clergy, staff, students, members, alumni, or community leaders consulted after the controversy? If so, what was the process and outcome?
- Did Rhema publish or adopt a clear doctrinal statement affirming that interracial dating and marriage are not forbidden by Scripture?
- What current training, complaint mechanism, investigation standard, and non-retaliation safeguard applies to reports of racial discrimination or race-based spiritual harm?
- What portion of executive, pastoral, faculty, and board decision-making roles is held by people from historically marginalized racial groups, and what authority accompanies those roles?
- What records are available to members and alumni who seek clarification about the historical controversy and the institution's current position?

High-Value Records to Request or Preserve

- Original full sermon audio, original recording date, sermon title, and complete transcript.
- Complete correspondence between Price, Hagin, and/or their organizations related to the controversy.
- Any Rhema board minutes, policy memoranda, newsletters, press releases, or internal communications from 1992-2001 addressing race, interracial marriage, or the Price dispute.
- Archived issues of The Word of Faith magazine, official Rhema publications, and media-response files.
- Historic and current student, employee, pastoral, and leadership nondiscrimination policies.
- Documented process and outcomes for any diversity, reconciliation, racial-equity, or pastoral-accountability initiatives.
- Firsthand testimony only when supported by contemporaneous records, full context, and clear consent for publication.

Sources and Source Notes

Sources are listed for verification. The statements in this brief are paraphrased unless quotation marks appear. URLs were checked on June 24, 2026. Access to some archival pages may change over time.

1. **1. Los Angeles Times (March 28, 1998), "Issue of Racism Breaks Ties That Bound Two Churches."**
<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1998-mar-28-me-33511-story.html> - Primary contemporary news reporting on the reported apology and dispute.
2. **2. Los Angeles Times (July 25, 1999), "Rude Awakening on Racism Gave Minister New Mission."**
<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1999-jul-25-mn-59449-story.html> - Contemporary reporting on Price's ministry actions and reported board resignations.
3. **3. Charisma (July 31, 2000), "He's Still Not Afraid to Confront."**
<https://mycharisma.com/charisma-archive/hes-still-not-afraid-to-confront/> - Retrospective reporting on Price's racism series and backlash.
4. **4. Rhema Bible Church Facebook post / video (2020), "Racism is real and it must be eradicated!"**
<https://www.facebook.com/rhemabiblechurch/videos/racism-is-real-and-it-must-be-eradicated/3135693889821493/> - Official social-media post; reviewed as later public messaging, not as a verified resolution of the 1990s dispute.

5. **5. Los Angeles Sentinel (April 6, 2023), “Pastor Hagin Preaches ‘Elevate as You Celebrate’ at Crenshaw Christian Center.”** <https://lasentinel.net/pastor-hagin-preaches-elevate-as-you-celebrate-at-crenshaw-christian-cente.html> - Reporting on later public contact and a reported \$50,000 gift.
6. **6. Supplied newspaper clipping image.** - The clipping attributes remarks to Kenneth Hagin Jr. and describes the national debate over interracial marriage. The publication/date is not fully visible in the supplied copy; independent archival verification is recommended.
7. **7. User-supplied YouTube link, “Kenneth Hagin and the Racist Roots of the Word of Faith Gospel.”** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DQHToAuUeM> - Used only as a lead to public discussion; not treated as independent confirmation of claims without corroborating sources.
8. **8. Rhema Bible Church leadership page supplied by user (Bill Ray).** <https://www.rhemabiblechurch.com/im-new/bill-ray/> - Used only to identify current publicly posted leadership context. This brief makes no inference about any individual hiring decision.

Limitations and Publication Standard

This brief uses a cautious standard: distinguish direct evidence from reported accounts; identify source conflicts; avoid assigning collective responsibility to individuals; do not treat later relationship repair as automatic resolution; and invite original records that can correct, expand, or contextualize the history. Readers should review original source material before drawing conclusions.

For corrections or additional primary-source records: info@okchildwellbeing.org