# KENNETH E. HAGIN

## Founder Family History, Public Legacy, and Documented Context

*A public-source research brief*

### Purpose and scope

This report compiles publicly accessible ministry sources, historical obituary material, and genealogy databases to identify confirmed close-family relationships, summarize Kenneth E. Hagin's public ministry development, and distinguish documented historical debate from unsupported claims. It does not assign responsibility to relatives for the conduct of others.

Prepared for website publication | Oklahoma Child Wellbeing
Updated June 23, 2026 | Financial context, early-ministry testimony, and net-worth notation added

# Executive summary

Kenneth Erwin Hagin (August 20, 1917 - September 19, 2003) was a Pentecostal/charismatic minister, author, and founder of Kenneth Hagin Ministries and Rhema Bible Training College. Rhema identifies him as the founder of its ministry and reports that he ministered for nearly 70 years. Independent descriptions commonly place him among the most influential early teachers in the modern Word of Faith movement.

## Confirmed immediate family

| Relationship | Name | Public-source basis |
|---|---|---|
| Parents | Jess (also indexed as Jesse Lee) Hagin and Lillie Viola Drake Hagin | Rhema ministry history names Lillie Drake Hagin and Jess Hagin; obituary and genealogy records use Jessie/Jesse Lee. |
| Spouse | Oretha Rooker Hagin | Contemporaneous and ministry sources identify Oretha as his wife; marriage commonly reported as November 25, 1938. |
| Son | Kenneth Wayne Hagin (Kenneth W. Hagin) | Official Rhema sources identify him as Kenneth E. Hagin's son and current senior pastor/president. |
| Daughter | Patricia “Pat” Hagin Harrison | Pat Harrison Ministries identifies Pat as Kenneth E. Hagin's daughter. |

## Siblings and half-siblings: documentation standard

The strongest cross-source support identifies three full siblings: Jessie Oleta Hagin Armstrong, George Wayne “Dub” Hagin, and Forrest Glenn Patrick “Pat” Hagin. FamilySearch shows the four children together in the parental household, while an obituary for Kenneth E. Hagin names Oleta, George Wayne, and Forrest as surviving siblings. Find a Grave also indexes Donald Ray Hagin and Kern Lee “Bud” Hagin as half-siblings. Because online genealogy databases can contain user-contributed errors, this report labels those latter two as genealogical-database references rather than independently verified close-family facts.

# Family history and relationship map

## Parents and early household

Kenneth was born in McKinney, Texas, to Lillie Viola Drake Hagin and Jess Hagin. Rhema's own historical timeline states that he was born there on August 20, 1917. Genealogy and memorial databases index the father as Jesse Lee Hagin, a spelling variation commonly found in historical records.

## Full siblings identified in multiple sources

Jessie Oleta Hagin Armstrong (1913-1968); George Wayne “Dub” Hagin (1915-1991); and Forrest Glenn Patrick “Pat” Hagin (1923-1986). A 2003 obituary lists Oleta, George Wayne, and Forrest as Kenneth E. Hagin's siblings, consistent with FamilySearch household results.

## Half-sibling references requiring care

Find a Grave indexes Donald Ray Hagin (1930-2018) and Kern Lee “Bud” Hagin (1934-1994) as half-siblings. These entries are useful leads but should not be represented as independently adjudicated genealogy without primary vital records or a contemporaneous family record.

## Marriage and children

Hagin married Oretha Rooker in 1938. Their children were Kenneth Wayne Hagin, born in 1939, and Patricia Hagin Harrison, born in 1941. Public ministry sources describe both adult children as having worked in ministry.

## Descendants and family governance

Kenneth W. Hagin became the public ministry successor after Kenneth E. Hagin’s death in 2003. Pat Harrison has operated a separate teaching ministry with her late husband, Buddy Harrison. The existence of shared family ministry history does not establish that each descendant participated in governance decisions of every Rhema-affiliated entity.

## What the record does not establish

- No public source reviewed establishes a comprehensive, verified list of every Hagin relative, spouse, cousin, descendant, or family-connected employee.
- No genealogy database entry should be used alone to make allegations about a living person, property, finances, ministry position, or legal history.
- Family connection by itself is not evidence of misconduct, knowledge, approval, participation, or organizational responsibility.

# Public ministry history and education

| Date | Publicly documented development |
|---|---|
| 1917 | Born in McKinney, Texas. |
| 1934 | Rhema history recounts his reported healing experience at age 17, which became central to his later testimony. |
| 1936-1948 | Official and secondary biographies state that he began preaching/pastoring in Texas and was associated with Assemblies of God ministry during this period. |
| 1949 | Began itinerant teaching and evangelistic ministry, according to official timelines. |
| 1963 | Formed Kenneth E. Hagin Evangelistic Association in Garland, Texas; later known as Kenneth Hagin Ministries. |
| 1966 | Ministry offices moved to Tulsa; audio distribution and radio teaching expanded. |
| 1974 | Founded Rhema Bible Training Center/College in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. |
| 1979 | Established the Rhema Prayer and Healing Center, according to official ministry history. |
| 2003 | Died in Tulsa at age 86; leadership succession continued through Kenneth W. Hagin. |

## Educational history

Public biographies emphasize ministry experience, self-described biblical study, pastoral work, travel, and teaching rather than a conventional degree path. The sources reviewed do not provide reliable evidence of an accredited undergraduate or graduate degree earned by Kenneth E. Hagin. Some secondary sources mention honorary doctorates, but the specific institution and date are inconsistently reported across sources. For website accuracy, the defensible description is: “No verified formal degree history located in reviewed public sources; honorary recognition is reported inconsistently and should be independently sourced before publication.”

# Credibility indicators, public debate, and research cautions

## Established public legacy

- Founded a ministry organization and a Bible training institution that continue to operate publicly after his death.
- Produced a large body of sermons, books, broadcast programming, and training materials, leaving a substantial primary-source record for direct review.
- His son and daughter have publicly described family involvement in the ministry, and official Rhema materials place his work at the foundation of their current organization.
- He is widely recognized as a major influence within the Word of Faith stream of charismatic Christianity, whether by supporters or critics.

## Documented criticism and historical controversy

This section describes published criticism; it does not convert disputed theology or academic allegations into adjudicated fact. Researchers and critics, including D.R. McConnell and later writers, have alleged extensive uncredited textual borrowing by Hagin from E.W. Kenyon and other authors. Christian Research Institute and The Gospel Coalition have published that allegation. Other scholars and defenders dispute aspects of the lineage and plagiarism analysis, and the Kenyon publishing community has publicly defended Hagin against the plagiarism accusation. A fair website presentation should describe this as a documented, contested historical debate and link readers to the underlying publications rather than state “plagiarism” as a final legal conclusion.

## Theological debate

Hagin’s teachings on faith, healing, prosperity, spiritual authority, and the “spiritual death of Jesus” have been the subject of sustained theological criticism and academic review. A University of Edinburgh thesis specifically appraises the “spiritual death” doctrine as taught by E.W. Kenyon, Kenneth E. Hagin, and Kenneth Copeland. The existence of theological disagreement is relevant to a historical profile, but it is not evidence of criminality or personal misconduct.

## What was not located in this review

- No reliable public source located in this review established a criminal arrest, conviction, or sentence for Kenneth E. Hagin.
- No reliable public source located in this review established professional licensure discipline, government enforcement action, or court adjudication against him personally.
- No source located establishes that living or deceased relatives are responsible for theological or organizational concerns solely because of family relationship.

## Reported online net-worth estimate: verification status

A third-party web article published in 2020 states that Kenneth E. Hagin's net worth was estimated at approximately $30 million. This figure is included because it appears in public online biographical content, not because it has been established through primary financial records.

Classification: Unverified online estimate. No probate inventory, estate-tax filing, personal tax return, audited personal financial statement, compensation record, deed portfolio, or court-filed estate valuation was located in this review to verify the approximately $30 million figure.

Use limitation: The estimate must not be represented as a verified net worth at the start of ministry, at death in 2003, or at any other date. It also must not be treated as proof that organizational property, donor-funded ministry assets, publishing revenue, or institutional operations were personally owned by Kenneth E. Hagin.

Context only: Rhema's official history and biography describe a large, long-running ministry organization with publishing, training, and international outreach. Organizational scale provides context for why online estimate sites may produce a dollar figure, but it does not authenticate that figure as a personal estate valuation.

# Sources, limitations, and website disclosure

### Early financial context: documented numbers and limits

This section separates documented numbers from claims that cannot be verified. It does not convert ministry revenue, donor-supported assets, school property, or institutional reach into Kenneth E. Hagin's personal wealth.

#### What can be stated numerically

1. Start-of-ministry personal net worth: no verified dollar amount located. Hagin began ministry in the mid-1930s, but the reviewed sources do not disclose wages, savings, debt, property, or a personal balance sheet at entry. The starting number is therefore unknown - not zero.

2. First-year pastoral hardship: Hagin wrote in an official Rhema publication that he wore out four pairs of shoes walking to preach during his first year as a pastor. The same account does not give his annual salary or a dollar value for the shoes.

3. 1949-1950 income change: Hagin wrote that after leaving his last pastorate for itinerant ministry, his income for February 1949 through January 1950 was $1,200 less than what the church had paid him during the previous 12 months. The underlying pastorate salary was not published, so a total annual income cannot be calculated from the statement.

4. Documented living conditions in that first itinerant year: Hagin wrote that his clothes and car had worn out; the car had four bald tires and no spare and was later sold for junk. He described a three-room apartment

and said his son slept on a rollaway bed in the kitchen. These are first-person descriptions of financial strain, not independently audited financial statements.

5. Reported end-point estimate: a third-party web article published in 2020 estimated Hagin's net worth at about $30 million. That is the only dollar figure located that claims to estimate personal net worth; it is unverified and not tied to a probate inventory, estate filing, tax record, audited statement, or court valuation. The source does not establish whether the figure refers to any particular year, including 2003, the year of his death.

### Numbers that should not be invented or overstated

The available record does not establish: (a) Hagin's childhood household income; (b) his parents' property value or net worth; (c) a salary for his first pastorate; (d) his exact earnings in 1949 or 1950; (e) personal assets or estate value at death; or (f) a verified numerical bridge from early hardship to the online $30 million estimate.

### Documented organizational-growth context - not personal wealth

Rhema's history places the formation of the Kenneth E. Hagin Evangelistic Association in 1963, a move of ministry offices to Tulsa in 1966, and the opening of Rhema Bible Training College in 1974. Public ministry descriptions also cite large distribution and audience figures for later ministry operations, including book circulation and magazine readership. Those figures may explain why online sites generate personal net-worth estimates, but they are organizational-reach indicators and must not be treated as Hagin's personal income or estate value.

### Recommended public wording

Kenneth E. Hagin's own published testimony documents early financial strain: he wrote that he wore out four pairs of shoes walking to preach in his first year as a pastor. He also wrote that his first full year of itinerant ministry, February 1949 through January 1950, produced $1,200 less income than the church had paid in the preceding 12 months, while he assumed rent, utilities, travel, and convention costs. No verified dollar amount has been located for his personal wealth when he entered ministry or at death. A 2020 third-party web article estimated his net worth at approximately $30 million; this remains an unverified online estimate rather than a documented estate valuation.

### Primary and secondary source notes for this section

Primary testimony source: Kenneth E. Hagin, “Freedom in Prayer,” Rhema, July 2003, for the four-pairs-of-shoes statement. Primary testimony source: Kenneth E. Hagin, “How God Taught Me About Prosperity,” Rhema, for the $1,200 income decrease and first-year itinerant living-condition description. Secondary estimate source: Ross Education Leads, “3 Faith-Building Facts About Kenneth Hagin’s Net Worth” (2020), treated only as an unverified online estimate.

## Core sources reviewed

- Kenneth Hagin Ministries / Rhema, “History of the Ministry” and Kenneth E. Hagin biography pages (official organizational history).
- Rhema Bible Training College, “Brother Kenneth E. Hagin” (official institutional biography).
- Rhema Bible Church, “Pastor Kenneth W. Hagin and Rev. Lynette Hagin” (official leadership biography).
- Pat Harrison Ministries, “About Dr. Harrison” (official daughter biography).
- Gonzales Inquirer, “Rev. Kenneth E. Hagin” obituary (2003), identifying parents and surviving siblings.
- FamilySearch, Kenneth Erwin Hagin and related family records (genealogy database; useful but not independently conclusive).
- Find a Grave, memorials for Kenneth E. Hagin and relatives (genealogy/memorial database; useful lead source, not adjudicated proof).

- Christian Research Institute, “What’s Wrong with the Word Faith Movement?”; The Gospel Coalition, “Prosperity Theology and the Faith Movement”; and University of Edinburgh thesis by W.P. Atkinson (published criticism and theological analysis).
- Contemporary and historical news/biographical reporting, including Christianity Today and Charisma, for context on his influence and death.

Ross Education Leads, “3 Faith-Building Facts About Kenneth Hagin’s Net Worth” (July 8, 2020), reporting an online estimate of approximately $30 million. Treated in this report as an unverified third-party estimate, not a primary financial record.

## Normal public-record disclosure

This document is a good-faith compilation of publicly accessible historical, ministry, media, and genealogy sources for research and public-interest accountability discussion. It is not a criminal background report, legal finding, genealogy certification, or statement that any relative committed, knew of, endorsed, or is responsible for another person’s actions. Family relationships, names, and dates are included only where relevant to public historical context. Genealogy databases can contain errors and should be confirmed against primary records before being relied on as definitive. The discussion of religious teaching reflects published debate and should not be read as a declaration of legal liability. Corrections or source documentation may be sent to info@okchildwellbeing.org.

## Recommended website placement

Place this report in the “Leadership & Family Background” section of the Rhema Accountability Example page, under a historical subheading such as “Founder History and Organizational Legacy.” Keep it separate from current case records, witness accounts, and incident-specific documentation so readers can distinguish institutional history from allegations involving later individuals.