

Has Benny Hinn Repented?

Scripture: 2 John 9–11

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Michael Brown says I owe him an apology and correction. In my previous post, ["Ignorance is not an Option."](#) I quoted some tweets from Dr. Michael Brown in which he seemed to claim ignorance of the legion of controversies surrounding Benny Hinn as an excuse for recording five shows for Hinn's *This Is Your Day* television program (four of which aired January 13-16). Brown later informed me that before my article was posted he had already apologized for the way he announced that he would appear on Hinn's program. He acknowledged that it ["was not wise & stirred up undue controversy."](#)

At the time I completed the article I was unaware that Dr. Brown himself had made any kind of apology. I am not a social media guy and spend *zero* time on Facebook and Twitter. So I am sorry I missed the follow-up tweet. I certainly would have cited it had I known it existed.

My complaint, however, had nothing to do with the tone or timing of Dr. Brown's original announcement. Nor does it ease my concern that he now regrets the *announcement* of his partnership with Hinn. What troubled me from the beginning (and still does) is the *reality* of Brown's partnership with Hinn.

What about the charge that Dr. Brown seemed to be claiming he did not know enough about Hinn to discern whether he was sufficiently sound or truly dangerous? I was by no means the only person who drew that conclusion based on what Dr. Brown wrote. Asked how he could possibly think it might be a good idea to appear on television with Benny Hinn despite the many false claims and bad doctrines Hinn has broadcast over the years, Brown originally said, "We've traveled in different circles over the years. Simple. And I don't watch Christian TV." (My earlier article quoted that statement.) Dr. Brown also wrote, ["While I'm quite aware that some . . . feel he is the ultimate false teacher and charlatan while others believe him to be a wonderful man of God, I have actually not monitored his ministry over the years."](#) My charge that Dr. Brown was claiming ignorance was based on statements like those.

Dr. Brown later wrote to me saying that he was "fully aware that he [Hinn] is often considered the poster boy for charismatic abuses, frequently accused of: doctrinal error; false healing claims; charismania; financial impropriety (including ungodly fundraising techniques); and moral violations (lavish lifestyle; adultery). In fact, when people say to me, 'What about false prophets (or, false teachers, or heretics) like so and so?,' invariably, they put his name at the beginning of the list."^[1]

Brown says a graduate of his school of ministry had earnestly assured him that the allegations against Hinn were either exaggerated or inaccurate and that Hinn is truly a man of personal godliness and doctrinal soundness. Brown goes on to say, "So, the issue was not one of ignorance or lack of awareness; the issue was whether I had been monitoring his ministry."^[2] In other words, because he had not been monitoring Hinn's ministry, he believed it was at least possible that Hinn had repented of his past sins. Says Brown, "To repeat yet again: I was fully aware of the many charges and controversies regarding Benny Hinn and I made an informed, prayerful decision to

appear with him on TV and begin a dialogue with him.”

So, to be fair and accurate, it appears I was speaking imprecisely (innocently so) when I implied that Brown was claiming ignorance of the many controversies and allegations regarding Hinn. For that, I unequivocally apologize to Mr. Brown.

Unfortunately, that clarification doesn’t really strengthen Brown’s position. It actually undermines it—significantly. Brown says his appearance with Hinn was intended to begin a dialogue with the world’s most famous “healing evangelist.”^[3] He hopes the dialogue will eventually give him an opportunity to ask Hinn about the controversies that swirl around him. That he desires to do this with Hinn must be taken at face value and, in and of itself, is commendable. The order of events, however, is *not*: the public appearances happened before the yet-unrealized confrontation of Benny Hinn. That Brown went on Hinn’s program with full knowledge of these doctrinal and character issues is far worse than if he had done so out of ignorance. Simple ignorance would have been carelessness at worst. Brown seems to have dug his hole only deeper.

Virtually every book in the New Testament warns about false teachers, and Scripture has a great deal to say about how they should be handled by believers. False teachers^[4] are to be marked, avoided, publicly rebuked, and exposed (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:11; Titus 1:9). The Scriptures are not unclear on this. False teachers are not to be welcomed into Christian fellowship. They are not to be given any endorsement. “Do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting” (2 John 10 ESV). By appearing on Hinn’s program, Dr. Brown gave a public endorsement to him and thus, according to Scripture, participated in his evil deeds (2 John 9-11). I am not making a judgment one way or the other regarding his intentions of doing so; only that he did.

In recent years, some within charismatic circles have asserted that Benny Hinn has repented of some, if not most, of his more brazen heresies and outlandish claims. Before we examine the question of Benedictus “Benny” Hinn’s repentance, or lack thereof, allow me to provide a (very) brief sketch.

Hinn says his call to ministry came when he was a young man attending a Kathryn Khulman^[5] crusade. He reports, “I went back to Canada and thought about it. ‘I’m going to try this,’ I said.”^[6]

In my previous post, I listed a small sampling of some of Hinn’s heresies, false prophecies, and outlandish claims spanning almost four decades. Here are a few of the highlights, along with some new ones:

- Claims he and a Catholic priest channeled the power of God to heal practically every patient at a hospital in Sault Sainte Marie, Ontario, Canada.^[7]
- Claimed to have video of Jesus walking around in one of his meetings. When asked to show the video, his staff said it had been “misplaced.”^[8]
- On Dec. 31, 1989, Hinn went into a trance and said God was giving him (in real time) prophecies about major events that would occur before the end of the next decade. Hinn predicted the total collapse of the American economy within a decade. He declared that during the 1990s the East Coast would be ravaged by earthquakes; a female would be elected as president; Fidel Castro would die in office; a “short man dictator” would arise; the rapture of the church would

occur; and the homosexual community of America would be destroyed by fire “in ’94 or ’95, no later than that.”[9]

-Claimed God told him by divine revelation that there are nine members in the Godhead.[10]

-Claimed that as a young man he was in his room talking to the Holy Spirit. When called to supper by the “woman of the house,” he said, “as I was about to leave, I felt someone take my hand and say, ‘Five more minutes. Just five more minutes.’ The Holy Spirit longed for my fellowship.”[12]

-Claimed that an image of Jesus appeared on the wall of his church and “stayed for eight weeks.” Hinn says, “Even the people who studied the Shroud of Turin came to see this image. ...the mouth [of Jesus] would move, the Lord’s mouth would move...but His mouth would only move as I was preaching.”[13]

-Claimed (repeatedly) that he once saw a man raised from the dead on the platform on which he was standing. When later questioned by a reporter about the incident he said, “I did not see it. In that one case we did hear about it.”[14]

-Regularly “slays in the Spirit” people who get up on stage by touching them on the forehead or cheeks, waving his coat at them, or yelling, “Fire!” Once he even managed to slay himself! This practice has not one shred of biblical support.[15]

-Claimed to have a department that verifies all his healings.[16] I have spoken with a former employee of Hinn who says not only that the healings are not verified but that such a department does not even exist.

-Seed-faith theology is a staple in Hinn’s teaching. He promises people that if they “sow a seed” (translated, give him money), God will give them a “harvest.”

-Teaches that “if the preaching of the gospel lacks signs and wonders, it’s an empty shell.”[17]

-Claimed the Holy Spirit told him women were originally intended to give birth out of their sides.[11]

It is said by some that Benny Hinn repented of some of his more brazen heresies and outlandish claims. For example, some point to interviews he did with *Christianity Today* in 1991 and *Charisma* magazine (which to this day promotes and carries advertisements for some of the worst of the word-faith heretics) in 1993 in which he said that he no longer believed in many of the doctrines of the word-faith movement.[18] His disavowal of word-faith teaching was predictably short lived. Within months of those interviews he was teaching the exact same things he had supposedly renounced.

While it is true that Hinn is no longer teaching a nine-member Godhead[19] or that Jesus had “union with the Satanic nature” or that women were intended to give birth out of their sides, here’s the rub: for all those teachings, Hinn originally claimed divine-revelation-knowledge as his source. He insisted *God told him* those things. He furthermore claimed God was the source of all the false prophecies he has uttered. Having claimed divine authority for these pronouncements, he should not now get a pass just because he is no longer repeating the falsehoods. He needs to address the issue squarely and confess to his followers that he was not speaking the truth when he claimed God was the source of such “revelations.”

There are only three possibilities with Hinn’s false teachings, failed prophecies, and bogus claims:

1. He is lying.
2. He is up to his eyeballs in demonic deception.

3. Both A & B

Michael Brown suggested in an email that charismatics sometimes simply imagine they have “heard God’s voice, received a revelation, or even seen something in the Spirit when it was actually their own imagination”—as if Benny Hinn’s false prophecies could be written off as the innocuous products of an overactive faculty in his brain. But as any parent of an imaginative child will affirm, someone who repeatedly and compulsively reports things he imagined as if they were factual is in fact a pathological liar. Whatever is behind Benny Hinn’s fanciful claims, there is simply no reasonable way to write it all off as innocent. Someone as intelligent as Michael Brown ought to be able to see that. The fact that he will not acknowledge the gravity of so many false claims undermines Dr. Brown’s credibility.

If Benny Hinn genuinely wants to repent of his past teachings, false prophecies, and general ministerial malfeasance, he would need to do the following:

1. Admit publicly that when he said God was speaking to him, he was making a false claim.
2. Admit publicly that he has lied about major events in his own life story (clearing out that hospital, for example).[\[20\]](#)
3. Admit publicly to his numerous false prophecies.[\[21\]](#)
4. Admit publicly that he has repeatedly proclaimed people healed who were not, in fact, healed.
5. Stop teaching that if people will give money to him God will bring them a financial windfall and heal their bodies or those of their sick children. He also needs to apologize to everyone he has scammed and exploited by his seed-faith theology.
6. Stop teaching that it is always God’s will to be physically healed, thereby putting undue guilt on the person who is sick.
7. End his public teaching ministry, take down his ministry website and the false teaching it contains, and pull his false books off the shelves.

I’m not talking about a private admission of guilt and regret, followed by a brief respite from public ministry. I’m talking about Zaccheus-level repentance—the kind wherein he exhausts himself and his personal fortune to set right all the wrongs he’s committed.

My earnest wish is that Benny Hinn would genuinely repent—that God would graciously grant him repentance (cf. Acts 5:30-31; 11:17-18; 2 Timothy 2:24-26). There is of course the sobering possibility that Hinn is one of those whom Jude spoke about who have been “long beforehand marked out for this condemnation” (1:4) and, therefore, he is beyond repentance. Either way, the time will certainly come when Benny Hinn will regret having played fast and loose with truth in the name of God.

One thing is clear: Benny Hinn’s conversations with Michael Brown did not provoke him to sober self-examination and repentance. On January 17, the day after Michael Brown’s last show was aired, Hinn’s special guest was Steve Munsey, pastor of Family Christian Center in Munster, Indiana. Steve Munsey and Todd Coontz (another frequent guest of Hinn) are two of the worst deceivers in the dark realm of charismatic shills and charlatans—bottom-feeders in the word-faith movement/prosperity gospel.[\[22\]](#) Or, switching metaphors, they are theological snake-oil salesmen. (My sincere apologies to all snake-oil salesmen.) During the broadcast, Munsey claimed to hear the voice of Jesus in real time, promising Hinn’s viewers that if they would call in and sow \$250 that they

would receive a twelve-fold return, and God would heal them of any sickness.

(*Why \$250?* You ask. Well, that's a reference to the boy who gave Jesus two fish and five loaves of bread. "2" fish and "5" loaves, and add a "0" for good measure. Total seed: \$250. And the promised twelve-fold return for your \$250? That's because there were twelve baskets of fragments left over! Hermeneutics is not really a precise discipline among prosperity preachers.)

As I wrote my first draft of this blogpost on the morning of February 3, 2014, at 10:38 a.m, I checked Benny Hinn's website. Under the headline "Activating God's Favor with Your Faith,"^[23] Hinn had written:

If you want favor in your home, your job, your family situations, even opportunities and inheritances that will arise in 2014, you must begin planting now. Harvest and favor always follow seedtime. Without planting, there is no harvest!

Step out in faith now and send your most generous offering, and then begin expecting your own unprecedented miracle. Remember the promise in God's Word:

"Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness" (2 Corinthians 9:10).

God will multiply your seed-gift as you sow it toward the spreading of the Gospel.

Increase your seed level to increase your harvest level, because that's what releases the anointing for favor. Every level of giving releases your faith. You must release greater seed in order to release a greater harvest. It is impossible to see a greater harvest if you are content to give sparingly.^[24]

Has Benny Hinn repented? If you think he has, I have a bridge I'd like to sell you.

For more from Justin Peters, visit www.justinpeters.org.

^[1] Brown, email to me dated January 13, 2014.

^[2] Ibid.

^[3] "Healing evangelist" is how Hinn is described on the back cover of his own book, *He Touched Me* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999).

^[4] I stand by my statement that I made to Dr. Brown on his radio program and in my first post that Hinn is a false teacher and is not a Christian. Brown played clips from Hinn that sounded orthodox in their content. That Hinn makes orthodox statements and, on occasion, can even rightly present the gospel is not the issue. Balaam spoke truth as well but was still a false prophet (Numbers 22-24; 2 Peter 2:15). Not everything that false teachers teach is false. This is why discernment is so vitally important. Further, that people have likely been saved listening to Hinn present the gospel in no way authenticates his ministry. God holds His name and His word above all things (Psalm 138:2) and honors the message itself, not the messenger.

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[5] Kuhlman was arguably the world's most famous faith healer between the 1940s and 1970s.

[6] Benny Hinn, *The Anointing* (Nashville, TN Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), pg. 52. Though Hinn never met Kuhlman personally, he has copied many of her mannerisms. She wore a white dress; Hinn wears a white suit. She "slew" people in the spirit, Hinn has brought this practice to new theatrical levels. So fond of Kuhlman is Hinn that not even her death has kept her from visiting him. Hinn claims that she appears to him in visions from beyond the grave to give him ministerial direction. In one of these encounters, which Hinn describes as "visions of the night," Kuhlman said to him, "'Follow me.' That's all she said. And I followed her into a second room. In that second room stood the Lord. When the Lord, uh, when, when I saw the Lord, Kathryn disappeared. She was just gone [Hinn snaps his fingers]. And now the Lord looked at me and said, 'Follow me.'" [Benny Hinn, *This Is Your Day* (TIYD) television broadcast, June 11, 1997]

[7] Hinn, *Welcome Holy Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997), pgs. 232-235.

[8] I attempted to get an audience with Hinn but was refused. I was successful only in speaking with one of his staff at Hinn's ministry headquarters in Grapevine, Texas.

[9] Hinn, audio clip recorded Dec. 31, 1989, at Orlando Christian Center. Audio on file.

[10] Hinn, sermon entitled "A New Spirit" delivered to Orlando Christian Center, aired on TBN (October 13, 1990). Video on file.

[11] Hinn, audio recording. Exact date not known but likely early 1990s. Audio on file.

[12] Hinn, *Good Morning Holy Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), pg. 56.

[13] Hinn, *TIYD* broadcast with Oral Roberts as guest. Video on file.

[14] Benny Hinn interview with unknown reporter. Video on file.

[15] The closest thing in Scripture which even remotely looks like the charismatic practice of being "slain in the Spirit" is recorded in John 18:1-6. The ones who "drew back and fell to the ground," however, were the Roman soldiers coming to arrest Jesus—not Christians. Further, think of the audacity of what is being displayed. Hinn throws around the Third Person of the triune God like He was his plaything. That Hinn would do this as a staple of his theatrics on stage shows that he does not know the Holy Spirit. If he did, he would reverence Him, not sling Him around to knock people over.

[16] Canadian Broadcasting Corporation documentary entitled “Do You Believe in Miracles?” aired in 2004. Video on file.

[17] Hinn, *TIYD* broadcast from 2007. Video on file. This is a telling clip from Hinn. Hinn maintains that unless signs and wonders accompany the preaching of the gospel, then the gospel in and of itself has no power. This statement alone is more than sufficient to prove that he really has no understanding of the true transformational power of the Gospel of Christ as recorded in the written Word of God (Luke 16: 27-31; Romans 1:16).

[18] Randy Frame, “Best-Selling Author Admits Mistakes, Vows Changes,” *Christianity Today* 35 (October 28, 1991) and Stephen Strang, “Benny Hinn Speaks Out,” *Charisma and Christian Life* 19 (August 1993), pg. 24.

[19] This is one of Hinn’s more notable heresies. Hinn did rescind this teaching in the same *Charisma* article already referenced, saying that as soon as he repeated the teaching he “could feel tension in the congregation. . . . So I tried to clear the air. Jokingly I said, ‘There must be nine of them.’ Well, the people laughed and I thought, *Boy that was a dumb thing to say*. Then I forgot about it.” Strang, “Benny Hinn Speaks Out,” pg. 25. That is a lie. I have the video of the nine-member Godhead teaching in my possession. Hinn was clearly *not* joking and the congregation did *not* laugh. In fact, after making the “nine of them” statement, Hinn continued the teaching for another solid seven minutes.

[20] Incidentally, if this story was true then why—*WHY*—does Benny Hinn not go to hospitals today? Why is he not right now at St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital channeling the power of God to heal those kids with cancer?

[21] This would be a bit tricky for him given that one who prophesies falsely is, by definition, a false prophet.

[22] For the record, Dr. Brown has told me in an email that he is aware of Munsey’s fund-raising techniques and has renounced them.

[23] In the word-faith movement, faith is not placed *in* God, but rather is a force which we direct *at* God to make Him do our bidding. This, coupled with the word-faith doctrine of Positive Confession, is almost identical to the New Age teaching known as “The Law of Attraction,” also known as “The Secret.”

[24] Source: <http://www.bennyhinn.org/looking-back-looking-forward/> Accessed Feb. 3, 2014.