

Benny Hinn - A Closer Look

Without Prejudice

Benny Hinn is an ordained Assembly of God Pastor, at the Orlando Christian Centre in Florida, which boasts up to 10,000 people in attendance. (In 1996 he resigned from the AOG).

Even within his own Charismatic ranks, his hermeneutical and exegetical methods have alarmed many church leaders across the world. The alarm is heightened when one realises that Hinn has an audience of up to 100 million via TV satellite, as well as reaching countless millions with his books and tapes.

Exaggerations?

For many years researchers have documented 'exaggerations and lies' innocently put forward as truth by Benny Hinn. A report from *'Christian News'* (23/10/95), exposed Hinn for his false claims of supernatural power and mass healings at an Ontario hospital in 1976. They quoted Personal Freedom Outreach (PFO), who investigated the claims and found them to be *'more fiction than fact'*. They wrote: *'His new book 'Welcome Holy Spirit' claims that patients in a Roman Catholic Hospital, 'began to receive instant healing' when he and other clergy began to anoint them. [Hinn writes]: 'You could feel God's Spirit all over the building. Within a few minutes the hospital looked almost like it had been hit by an earthquake. People were under the power of the Holy Spirit up and down the hallways as well as in the rooms'. However, a hospital statement reported: 'No such events have ever occurred at general Hospital ... Hinn's pronouncement can neither be verified through medical records nor by testimony from past or present personnel of this hospital. Mr. Hinn's claims are outlandish and unwarranted.'* (1)

Hinn's own testimony says he was cured of stuttering. However, when PFO investigated this claim and talked with several of Hinn's youth, none recalled him stuttering. Hinn claims that his father was the Mayor of Jaffa, Israel. PFO found that Hinn's father was in fact only *'a clerk in an Arab labour office'*, and in their quarterly Journal (7/93), PFO stated that Hinn had a *'propensity for exaggeration'*, and went on to detail his *'personal myth-making'*. Hinn says in his book, *'Good Morning Holy Spirit'* that he was converted in 1972 in his senior year. However, the 1972 year book has him as an *'underclassman'*, not a senior. Hinn also claims to have Israeli background and knowledge of the Hebrew language. Yet the fact is he is not Israeli and does not understand Hebrew. When one studies his teachings it becomes obvious that he is not a theologically trained person. Charismatic theologian J. Rodman Williams, of Regent University, participated in an interview between *Christianity Today* and Hinn, said Hinn was prone to *'extremism and exaggeration'*, and that Hinn's exegesis is *'frequently unsound and unbiblical'*. Williams attended some of Hinn's meetings and noted that *'psychological techniques are mixed with the spiritual.'* (2)

What spirit?

Hinn has claimed visitations from Jesus as early as the age of 11 years. He has many times claimed to be speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, yet even by his own admission he has spoken extra-Biblical myths at the best and outright heresy at the worst. Hinn once was taken to task for making the statement that God originally designed women to give birth out of their sides and that Adam could fly from planet to planet, swim like a fish, fly like a bird, walk on water, and all these because God gave him *'dominion'*. He falsely claimed that this *'dominion'* in Hebrew meant you could do everything that the thing you have dominion over could do. (3) At the moment he said this he claimed the Holy Ghost was teaching him. Hank Hanegraaff of the Christian Research Institute questioned him, (Hinn agreed to this when he found out he would be featured in Hanegraaff's book *'Christianity In Crisis'*), and Hinn repeatedly denied he had said this. Finally Hanegraaff told Hinn where he could find the statement on video. Hinn later accepted he had said it and when asked about the claimed Holy Spirit inspiration to say this, Hinn chuckled and said he got it out of the *Dakes* 1963 Bible notes.

On another occasion (31/12/89), he claimed to be *'drunk'*, (presumably *'spiritually drunk'*), when he made several prophecies and claimed he did not know what he was saying and that God spoke the words through him. Although spiritual drunkenness is mentioned in the Bible, it always speaks *against* it as a judgement or sin, (eg. Is.29:9,10; Jer.51:37-40).

When Hinn has been challenged on the things said *'under the influence of the Holy Spirit'*, his answer has been: *'...when you give a prophesy sometimes you can be way off...Hooo! He blew it; he's a false prophet! No. He just blew it...men of God blow it all the time. Paul blew it; Moses blew it; even Elijah blew it; even Elisha blew it! They all blew it; maybe not with prophecies...When the gift begins it begins rough, but then as you keep going with it you just get better and better and cleaner and purer with it. So today with the Word of knowledge - I'm just being open with you - I rarely miss anymore. Why? Because I recognise how to operate in it.'* (4)

The above statement has several flaws and also contradicts itself. Hinn begins by talking about prophesy and quotes the men of the Bible and then suddenly contradicts himself by saying they did *not* blow it in the area of prophesy. The fact is that God never makes a mistake and he never lies. A false prophet or a prophet that *'blows it'* is not speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, but is speaking by another spirit. One false prophesy makes the person a false prophet, (Dt.18)!

Also the men quoted by Hinn did not *'blow it'* in prophesy! Added to this is the false notion that when God gives a gift, it is *'rough'* and imperfect. This is nowhere to be found in scripture. In short, Hinn has zeal without knowledge.

Healer & Miracle Worker?; or Showman & Charlatan?:

Hinn has been exposed more than once by the church and the media for his false and exaggerated claims of healing. Hinn believes there should be no sickness for the saint of God and that everyone can be healed. He regularly claims healings on stage and on live TV. However, when challenged, he has failed to produce one authentic fully documented healing of any organic disease.

Benny Hinn's healings are not unlike other healings that have been investigated over many years. The following is an extract from 'A Medical View of Miraculous Healing' by Verna Wright, a Christian doctor: *'The British Medical Association conducted a survey much more recently...they sifted all the evidence and...their report concluded: We find that whilst patients suffering from psychogenic disorders may be cured by various methods of spiritual healing, just as they are by methods of suggestion and other forms of psychological treatment employed by doctors, we can find no evidence that organic diseases are cured solely by such means. The evidence suggests that any such cases claimed to be cured are likely to be either instances of wrong diagnoses, wrong prognosis, remission, or possibly of spontaneous cure...We could quote survey after survey in the same vein...Professor John Dundee, the professor of anaesthetics at Queens University, Belfast, recently looked at cases claimed to have received healing through the Centre For Christian Renewal. He looked at thirty two cases in all and came to the following conclusions: '...I failed to find undisputed evidence of miraculous healing, but I did meet patients who were improved in the mind and the spirit...Duncan Leighton wrote an article entitled, 'Signs One wonders', in which he tells of his own investigations...: ' In Africa in 1984, I followed the Derek Prince team through Zambia where they claimed thousands of miracle healings. We found none. Dr. Eric Rea examined one miracle leg-lengthening and found it a hoax. My letter asking Mr. Prince for detailed information was passed down the line until it reached Brian Bentley who knew someone whose sinus was cured.'*

I am certain that the person who claims to have the gift of healing discredits the person of Christ, because if, (and it is a big if), there are ninety nine successes and only one failure, even that would discredit Christ, because he never fails. If we say to a man, 'in the name of Jesus rise up and walk', and he continues to lie...that is a failure which reflects upon the person and the power of Christ, and this is happening all the time...' (5)

A TV media expose of Benny Hinn (available - see footnote no.2), described him as being 'the daddy of all credit card religions', and that 'the only miracle with the Reverent Benny is how he has stayed out of gaol...It has got to be the greatest spectacle in religion today'. (6) This documentary shows Hinn claiming on stage to have healed three Aids victims on the spot. However, when challenged to produce blood tests as proof, Hinn admitted there was no proof. Added to this the television crew placed a healthy lady in a wheel chair as a 'polio victim'. Hinn claimed her healing when she went up on stage. Although Hinn claims not to use testimonies of healings unless they have been verified, this lady acting as a polio victim, was used by Hinn on television without any verification of her healing. Because he has been set up and exposed in this way by the media more than once, he now has a disclaimer with his telecasts which shifts the claims from the ministry back to the person giving the testimony.

This same documentary also showed the many 'prayer requests' left on the floor for the garbage man to pick up, yet the enclosed money and offerings had already been collected. Indeed, Hinn's extravagant lifestyle does not help his image when exposed by the media. He lives in a home worth near 1 million dollars and receives well over \$100,000 per year as a church salary from a board that is made up mostly of his family or other hand picked people. This is apart from between 1 and 2 million dollars received in book royalties and other income from his ministries. One observer on the above video documentary stated: 'He's marketing miracles and that's what is so evil'.

Anyone viewing Benny Hinn on stage will see the style he uses to hype an audience. His antics of 'blowing' or 'throwing' the Holy Spirit onto people and waving his coat to have people 'slain in the spirit' are a well known trade mark of his ministry. At one meeting it is reported that a woman died after someone fell on top of her.(7)His audience appear to respond almost instantly to Hinn's 'cue'. Hinn can often be heard to say that the 'anointing' is so strong that he himself can hardly stand up. It is the supernatural that brings many to his meetings. PFO, when exposing errors in one of his books, stated: '...take out the supernatural and that book won't sell much.'

Doctrine:

Atonement:

Like the Word-Faith teachers Hinn teaches there were two deaths at the cross - spiritual and physical; that the spirit of Jesus, (then only a man's spirit), was taken into Hell; that Jesus became one with Satan and took on his nature; that Jesus for a time lost his deity and that the father deserted him. Hinn says: 'He who is the nature of God became the nature of Satan when He became sin.' (8)

The above beliefs are rank heresy and must be treated as such! The Bible states clearly that we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus, (Heb.10:10); that the blood makes full atonement for the soul, (Lev.17:11); that Jesus had power over death, (Jn.17:2); and that Satan had no hold over Him, (Jn.14:30,31;16:33;10:18). This Word-Faith teaching by Hinn was first taught by the likes of Hagin and Copeland and has its roots in the metaphysical cults.(9) Hinn and the Word-Faith teachers misunderstand the word 'substitution'. Christ was made sin in a legal and forensic sense. 'Substitution' is an Old Testament concept in which an animal was used as a substitution for sin but it did not become sin, rather sin was imparted to it.

Although the Word-Faith teachers claim to believe in righteousness as a gift from God, they teach that this righteousness is God's *nature*, not a legal righteousness credited to our account as is the orthodox belief of scriptures and the church fathers down through the ages. The Bible says we were made in the image of God but the Word-Faith teachers teach that we only partake of the *nature* of God.

Crenshaw sums up the Word-Faith teaching on redemption: *'The whole plan of redemption, according to the prosperity teachers, is turned on its head: God gave Adam the earth. Adam in turn lost it to Satan so that ever since the world has been given legally to Satan. (10) From then on man is born with Satan's nature, (whatever that is). God has no legal authority on earth. In the words of Fred Price, 'If God came here He would be trespassing, for he has no legal right here.'* (11) *There was no new birth in the Old Testament; there could not be such until Jesus came. When Jesus came He 'operated' only as a man by the 'anointing' of the Holy Spirit. The miracles He did we can do by the same Holy Spirit. When he died he had not finished the plan of redemption but had to go to Hell to compensate Satan. While in Hell he received Satan's nature and literally became a sinner...Satan and the demons tortured him for three days and three nights. Since Jesus had never personally sinned, legally Satan could not hold him...But Jesus still had Satan's nature so God made Jesus righteous, justified him, and caused him to be the first one ever to be born again. Then the Father raised him from the dead to exercise dominion. When we are justified, we receive the Father's very nature, which is also the new birth. It is not possible to blaspheme more than this'.* (12)

Hinn does claim that he repented of Word-Faith teaching and rejected it, (*Charisma*, 4/91, P.28). However, he had made the same statement back in 1988 and following this he preached it again on 9/12/90. At this time he made the statement: *'Jesus Christ knew the only way He would stop Satan is by becoming one in nature with him. What did you say? What blasphemy is this? No, you hear this! He did not take my sin - He became my sin! Sin is the nature of Hell...He became one with the nature of Satan...'* This last statement by Hinn was prefaced with the claim that, *'The Holy Ghost showed it to me'*. This not only contradicts sound theology but also Hinn's statement made to *CRI* and *Logos Outreach* on the previous Friday December 7th - that this teaching was 'heresy'. Hinn continues to sell tapes with this teaching on them.

Trinity:

In the first edition of *'Good Morning Holy Spirit'* Hinn claimed that each member of the Godhead had a body, soul and spirit, (P.80-92). Hinn in fact at least implicitly teaches a 'tritheism' - the belief in three gods or divine beings. He does this by making each person very distinct and thus taking away from the one God. Hinn also uses the same scriptures, (Ex.31:18; 33:20; Is.30:27,28; 66:4), that the Mormon church uses to teach his tritheistic view of God. Hence his books are viewed by many prominent theologians as unsound in doctrine, (Tim.1:3-7). To prove the above statements let us look at one statement that Hinn made: *'Each one of them is a triune being by himself... There are nine of them.'* Hinn later claimed this was a *'dumb statement'*, and to have retracted it at the very next weeks service. However there is no record of this claimed retraction.

Deity:

If the above is not enough, Hinn's teaching on the deity of Christ should make all Christians shudder. Hinn says: *'Jesus disrobed Himself of the divine form'*. (13) This is the ancient heresy of *'kenosis'*. Yes, Jesus did submit to the Father but He did *not* give up the deity and the church has *always* taught this truth! Hinn also says: *'Had the Holy Spirit not been with Jesus, He would have sinned'*. Hinn went on here to say that Jesus could have remained in the grave had the Holy Ghost changed His mind.(14) Again, this is contrary to scripture and two thousand years of church teaching. Although the Holy Spirit was involved, Jesus raised Himself, (Jn.2:19; 10:17,18). It was impossible for Jesus to stay dead, (Acts 2:24)!

Deification of Man:

Hinn says: *'When you were born again the word was made flesh in you. And you became flesh of His flesh and bone of his bone. Don't tell me you have Jesus. You are everything He is and ever shall be...It [the new man] says, 'I am as He is'. That's what it says...As He is, so are we in the world. Jesus said, 'Go in my name, go in my stead.' Don't say, 'I have'. Say, 'I am, I am, I am, I am, I am.'* (15)...*'In my case, I know I have lost complete desire for anything to do with the world. My worldly desires are gone...I no longer have any rebellion in me. So I am Benny Jehovah... When you say 'I'm saved'; what are you saying? You're saying, 'I'm a Christian'. What does that word mean? It means 'I'm anointed'. Do you know what the word 'anointed' means? It means 'Christ'. When you say 'I'm a Christian', your saying... 'I'm a little messiah walking on earth'...The new creation is just like God...You are a little god on earth running round'.* (16)

The Mormon church, a cult group, teaches that they are becoming *gods*. The above quotes show clearly that the Hinn teaches that we are gods! Which teaching is worse? This was the same kind of lie that Satan used in the garden of Eden. The Bible says the Lord our God He is one, (Dt.6:4). Unlike man God is sovereign, (Is.48:11; Ps.75:5; Eph.1:11; Dan.4:35,37), and *separate* to His creation. The above quote is also clear evidence that Hinn does not study! Nor does he know his Greek. The word *'Christian'* does not mean *'I'm anointed'* but rather a *'follower of Christ'*. Let the reader take note that Matthew 24:5 warns of men saying things like the above. There is only one Christ!

It is time we treated these teachings for what they are - rank and dangerous heresy! It is blasphemy to claim we 'are everything He is and ever shall be'. It is blasphemy to claim to be 'I am', (the name for God - Jn.8:24, Ex.3:13); a 'messiah'; and a 'little god'! This is man attempting to be God. It is New Age, and the same lie that Satan told to Eve in the garden - that she could be like God!

The Sovereignty of God:

As in the Word-Faith teaching, Benny Hinn attacks the sovereignty of God. Hinn says: 'Never, ever, ever go to the Lord and say, 'if it be your will'! Don't allow such faith destroying words to be spoken from your mouth'. However, the scriptures that refute the above Word-Faith teaching, and which are rarely heard, are those concerning the very will of God, (1Jn.5:3:22; 1Jn.5:14; James 4:15; Matt.8:2; Ps.40:8)! These are some of the balancing scriptures to much of their false teaching: '**And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, he heareth us**', (1Jn. 5:14). '**For that you ought to say, if the Lord will we shall live, and do this or do that. But now you rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil**, (James 4:15,16). Other scriptures worthy of consideration are: Psalm 40:8; 143:10; Matthew 8:2 and 2Corinthians 12:20,21. We see from these scriptures that we do not have an open cheque book to always create our own circumstances. The Word-Faith teachers rarely use the above scriptures concerning the sovereign will of God and do not appear to allow room to seek His will.

Let us listen to what the Bible says about the sovereignty of God: '**I have purposed it, I will also do it...For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it..**(Is.48:11), **...He putteth down one, and setteth up another** (Ps.75:7),**...Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will**, (Eph.1:11). Other scriptures that confirm the above are: Is.46:10; Job 23:13; Ps.115:3; 135:6; Pr.21:1.

Scripture:

Many examples could be given of Hinn's blatant misuse of, and addition to scripture. Hinn says: '*Please, please, please, don't think we're here to repeat something you've heard the last fifty years...if we quit giving you new revelation, you're dead!*' (17) ... '*I'm giving you a new revelation you haven't heard before.*' (18) This obviously contradicts scripture, namely Jude 3: '**...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints**'. To add to or take away from the Word is deadly. Jesus Himself said, '**The scripture cannot be broken**', (Jn.10:35). In Revelation 22:18 a curse is threatened to anyone who '**adds to these things or takes away from the Word**'. This threat is backed up by much scripture: In Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32 and 5:22 we read that commandments or revelations are not to be added to or changed in any way. In Proverbs 30:5,6 the Bible says, '**Every Word of God is pure...Do not add to His Words...**'; and in Galatians 1:8, Paul says, '**But even if we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than that we have preached to you, let him be accursed**'.

Roots:

Hinn acknowledges associations with the Faith camp, ie. Hagin, Copeland, etc. Although at times he has tried to distance himself, and even recanted from these men and their false teachings (19), he still teaches much of Word-Faith teaching. He also was influenced by three women: Maria Woodworth, Aimee Semple McPherson, Kathryn Kuhlman. All were controversial and divorced.

Conclusion:

Many of the Major counter-cult ministries, including the *Christian Research Institute*, have exposed Hinn for fraudulent practices and false teaching. Sometimes he has recanted, only to seemingly re-teach the same heresies later. To Hinn's credit, after admitting errors, he has revised some of the heresies in further editions of his books. Charismatic Theologian, J. Williams, stated of Hinn's first edition of '*Good Morning Holy Spirit*', that it was '*full of theological errors*'. However, many have asked the question, if he is serious about the errors in his books, why has he not removed them from the market? The answer could well be because he is not prepared to lose the money that would result.

Hinn continues the habit of making mistakes. In 1989 Hinn assisted in a move to grant Pope John Paul II the award of '*Prince of Peace*'. After much criticism he withdrew his participation. However, he has been known to consistently extol the virtues of the Pope and Catholicism. In a Crusade in Rome in 1996 Benny Hinn met with serious opposition from Pentecostal and Charismatic groups. Terry Peretti, (brother to author Frank Perretti), wrote under the heading, '*Benny Hinn Disaster in Rome*': '*The November 9 & 10 crusade in Rome was the largest gathering of evangelicals ever at one place and one time in Italy with estimated numbers of 5000...The Italian AOG boycotted the meetings and several of the supporting independent Pentecostal groups pulled out...On the first night the preacher never once opened the Bible and on the second Mr. Hinn shocked his audience by courting the Catholic church and talking about meeting the Pope. The interpreter refused to continue and another was called to the platform. The Italian music group refused to come to the platform when called...The independent Pentecostal pastors of Italy agreed to sign a declaration of 'disassociazione' from Benny Hinn and his crusaders...It appears that the evangelicals will never invite Benny Hinn to Italy again.*' (20)

When criticised, Hinn retorts with counter blows such as : '*Sometimes I wish God would give me a Holy Ghost machine gun. [I'd] blow your head off!*'... '*Somebody's attacking me because of something I'm teaching. Let me tell*

you something, brother; You watch it!...Don't touch the anointing on my life...I've looked for one verse in the Bible - I just can't seem to find it - one verse that said if you don't like 'em. Kill 'em. I really wish I could find it..' (21)

It is interesting to note that the very thing Hinn does not like others doing, he does himself! He once said: *'There's a man called Harry [who] has just said, 'This man is phony.' Be careful Harry. I'm not a phony man...You don't know what you're playing with. Your first name is Harry...and your last name is Kray.'* (22)

In summary, Hank Hanegraaff of Christian Research Institute says: *'Hinn has not only bludgeoned scripture, but has also left in his trail the broken lives of people who have unwittingly fallen for his seductive suggestions...Benny has a bad habit of making up fanciful stories. Whether he is referring to his family history or of his rendezvous with the Holy Spirit, fantasy does not stack up with fact. Benny is a master at using his distortions to create an illusion of credibility.'* (23)

With all of the above information, how can the Christian do anything but accept that this man is a false teacher? He has been exposed by the secular media for his lies, false healings, misuse of money and his extravagant lifestyle. He has also been exposed by major counter cult ministries in America, by Charismatic theologians and numerous other respected church leaders. It is a shame to the church that the *secular* media has led the way in exposing this man. With all these facts in mind, how can the Australian Assembly of God invite Benny Hinn as their speaker to the AOG National Conference in May 1997?

What does the Bible say?: *'Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them'*, (Rom.16:17); *'And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them'*, (Eph.5:11); *'Now we command you brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us'*, (2Thess.3:6); *'If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to Godliness;...from such withdraw thyself'*, (1Tim.6:3-5).

Terry Arnold, April, 1997

- (1) As written in *'Biblical Fundamentalist'*, 1/96;
- (2) *Christianity Today*, 28/10/91, P.44;
- (3) Spiritual Warfare seminar, San Jose, California, 2/5/90;
- (4) *'Word of Wisdom'* sermon, Orlando Christian Centre & TBN, 23/2/91.
- (5) Available from TA Ministries;
- (6) *'Inside Edition'* TV expose. A video which includes this expose, (*'Signs & Wonders - Exposed'*), can be obtained from TA Ministries. This video contains stunning and irrefutable evidence of the danger of the Hinn ministry;
- (7) *'Charisma'*, Jan./88, P.54;
- (8) Sermon, *Orlando Christian Centre*, and aired on TBN, 12/90;
- (9) Proved conclusively in *'A Different Gospel'* by D.R. McConnell;
- (10) Word-Faith teachers say that, *'The world is presided over by Satan'*, (*'The Real Faith'*, by Kenneth Hagin, P.28). The expression *'god of this world'* means the people of the world worship him, not that he is omnipotent. God is and always has been a ruler above Satan and has dominion now;
- (11) TBN, 12 Midnight, Memphis, TN May/June, 1992.
- (12) *'Man As God: Word of Faith Movement'* by Rev. Curtis Crenshaw, P.332;
- (13) *'Our position in Christ'*, Tape #A031190-1;
- (14) *'Good Morning Holy Spirit,'* 1st Edition, P.136. In the second edition Hinn changed this slightly;
- (15) *'Our position in Christ'#2 - The Word made flesh*, Audio tape 2;
- (16) TBN, 6/11/90.
- (17) TBN 3/11/90.
- (18) Wacx-TV 55, Orlando, Florida, 25/10/90.
- (19) TBN 9/12/9.
- (20) *Orlando Christian Centre*, 2/88.
- (21) *'Christianity Today'*, 28/10/91, P.44; also 5/10/92, P.53.
- (22) As summarised in CETF Jan/Feb. 97.
- (23) As quoted in Hanegraaff's book and cited in an article from *'Christianity Today'* by Randy Frame, 1991.

For further documentation, video and audio Tapes, (with actual live recorded clips, voices & quotes) of Benny Hinn and other Word-Faith teachers, contact: TA Ministries, PO Box 1499, Hervey Bay, Qld, 4655, Australia. Ph. 0411489472 Website: www.taministries.net Email: taministries@bigpond.com