

Benny Hinn's Move Into Necromancy

Faith Healer Claims Contact with the Dead Foretells New Direction for His Ministry

by G. Richard Fisher
with M. Kurt Goedelman

The Disney Corporation in Orlando, Fla., is always coming up with new theme parks and new attractions with which to captivate and draw in tourists. Disney has to get not only new customers but repeat customers to survive. The world of televangelism appears almost the same.

To keep the gears of the ministry well-lubricated with the donations and gifts of the faithful, it seems nearly every month there has to be a new attraction, a new "prophecy," a new "word from the Lord" or some new sovereign act of God. These claims and revelations serve to hold onto a floating, thrill seeking, quickly dissatisfied Charismatic population.

Easily Dissatisfied

The superstars of televangelism overpromise to an audience they know is fickle and has a short attention and commitment span. What is popular this month may not be next month. What's hot and what's not depends on the creativity of the man and his organization. Rising fortunes and empires can begin to dwindle if new "power" centers or new spiritual "power brokers" offer a new and more exciting ride, attraction or innovation. *Charisma* magazine and the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) are the main marketplaces for the wild, weird and bizarre world of Charismania.

So what does Benny Hinn have to offer? As repeatedly documented in PFO's *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn*, the Orlando-based faith healer

has spawned many a new vision, a new testimony, a new claim, a new gimmick, a new cure-all, and a new twist on an old "deliverance" scheme over the past several years.

In all, the world of televangelism really has become as unrestrained as professional wrestling with Hinn being crowned as the current "reigning champ." False prophecies, heretical doctrines, spurious healings, an exorbitant lifestyle and fabricated personal historical accounts have not been able to dethrone Hinn as the leading guru of Charismatics.

In the mid-1990s, Hinn sought donations from those attending his crusades and from the viewers of his daily telecasts to go head-to-head on cable and television networks featuring psychic hot lines. The donations he received would permit his evangelistic efforts to reduce the spread and success of occultism being broadcast into homes. Yet today, these psychic hot lines are bigger and more intense than ever and Hinn has become a fellow traveler in the world of the occult.

Kathryn Kuhlman Returns

Hinn has long been infatuated with the late faith healer, Kathryn Kuhlman. His books and sermons are replete with the impact she supposedly made on his life and ministry. Now, Hinn has her as a female spirit guide. And with this claim, he is introducing a deadly spirit-

ist virus to his followers.

Hinn recently claimed that he was shown the future of his ministry from Kuhlman and Jesus in what he described as a "vision of the night." This revelation undoubtedly will electrify the bulk of his following. But perhaps, for some, they may now view Hinn as having crossed the line into dark and dangerous territory. This may be a ride that sounds the alarm and wakes them up to Hinn's pragmatic unorthodoxy and false teaching.

His account of this alleged vision was delivered to those attending a recent "Partner Conference" in Atlanta and to those viewing the June 11, 1997 installment of his daily *This Is Your Day* program.

On the broadcast, he stated:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I'm going to tell you something right now. The Lord showed me a vision about — goodness it's almost been a year now. And I—I—I—I can tell you I sense now the time has come when this vision is gonna be fulfilled. I had a vision of the night. What I saw, myself walk into a room. I've shared this before but just in case you — you've not heard it I want you to hear it. I saw myself walk into a room and there stood Kathryn Kuhlman. And I've not seen Kathryn in a dream or a vision [in] years. Uh, when she died, the day she died, the morning she died, I had a dream what I — what I saw in a — in a — in a — in a casket with

a white dress. And when I woke up in — in the morning, I knew she had died and it was on the news that same morning. And so it's been many years. And there she was standing in this room and she said to me—of course this was a dream, but really more of a vision. A lot of times dreams are really visions of the night, and the Bible calls them that. When — when God gives to you in the fashion it really came with me. When I was a little boy, I saw the Lord in this dream. It was really so real, it was really a vision because when — when he appeared to me my body became electric just like electricity went through me and when I awoke that electricity was still on my body.”¹

Hinn goes on recounting his “vision”:

“Well, anyway, in this one, in this vision that—that I saw—saw Miss Kuhlman. And she said, ‘Follow me.’ That’s all she said. And I followed her to 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 fingers]. And now the Lord looked at me and said, ‘Follow me.’ And I followed him to a third room. In the third room sat a gentleman — I still remember his face. I can tell you, I still remember the man’s face. And the man sat in this wheelchair in that third room. There was a big hole in his neck. A tube down his throat. He was crippled on that wheelchair. And he had tubes down his body. Totally crippled, totally para—totally, of course, paralyzed. The Lord laid his hands on this man and as he did the tubes disappeared, the hole closed, he was completely healed and got up off the wheelchair. It was a creative miracle. Now I’m standing watching the Lord in this vision heal this man. And now as the man was healed, the Lord looked at me with piercing eyes — I’ll not forget that one I’ll tell you. Looked at me with piercing eyes and said, ‘Do it!’ And the [Hinn snaps fingers] — and the dream and the vision came to an end.”²

Hinn next interprets the “vision” for his faithful:

“When I woke, when I got up, when I came out of the vision, I was trembling and perspiring from head to toes. I know exactly what that vision means. It was Kathryn Kuhlman who took me, who introduced me to the Holy Spirit. That is the meaning of that first room when she said, ‘Follow me.’ But when Kathryn was gone, Jesus was there. Kathryn did her job and was gone and the Lord said, ‘Follow me’ into a third room. And there was this man. I believe I’m about to enter that third room. [Audience applause.] I’m telling you I feel it. I sense it. I believe that room speaks of a dimension, a new dimension in the Spirit. I believe I’ve been in that second room now for the last seven years. What is amazing to me, what’s amazing to me is God works or has worked in my life in seven year cycles. I’m now in the seventh year — beginning the eighth of the ministry of these crusades. 1990 we started — March. This is what? ‘97. And just now I feel another platform, another dimension, another level is really coming. Well, saints, you’re going to be a part of it. God—God has sent you as partners to be a part of it. So how many are ready to see greater things for the glory of God?”³

Hinn’s description is somewhat confusing and at one point he says the apparition “was a dream.” And, if left at that, would be less of a concern. However, he qualifies the nature of the “dream” by claiming it was “really more of a vision.” In fact he uses the word “vision” ten times to describe the experience. Moreover, he is using this event as a mystical prescription from the other side. This apparition, Hinn says, declares and describes what is to become the new by-product of his ministry. It moves him to a claimed oracle from Jesus of new “creative miracles” — a higher level of signs and wonders. He is using it to solicit support from his followers. And as such, must be considered and examined in a serious and biblical manner.

Hinn’s “Mount of Transfiguration”

A few months earlier, Hinn lured the audience at his Honolulu Crusade with his revelations of not only Kuhlman but the Old Testament prophet Elijah.⁴ “I

have not just seen angels, I’ve seen saints,” he announced. His narrative there being even more brazenly spiritistic:

“You may have a problem with this, but I don’t honestly care. I’ve walked in [the supernatural] world. I’ve seen things you would never be able to understand, unless you were in it. *I’ve had individuals appear to me in my room.* Not only angels. I’ve seen sights in prayer. Incredible sights!”⁵

What were the “incredible sights” Hinn had “seen”? He detailed for his faithful one powerful encounter:

“Can I tell you something? I’ve never shared this. Never! I was in prayer one day and a man appeared in front of me. Happened for two days in a row, twice one day and the next day. The same man appeared. I’ve never told this, never. ... This is recently, I’m not talking about a long time ago. He was about six feet two. Old man. Had a beard. ... Glistening white beard. His face was somewhat thin, but very bold! Eyes — crystal blue. He had on a white garment, whiter than my shirt could ever get. On his head was a shawl, like a — like a covering. He looked like a priest. Every part of him glistened like crystal. And I spoke out and I said, ‘Lord, who is this man I see?’ I know you may — you may think I lost my mind, but the Lord said, ‘Elijah the prophet!’”⁶

Hinn next brought Kuhlman into the performance:

“Seven and half years ago, just before the ministry started, before these crusades began, suddenly in front of me I saw a group of people. I couldn’t even tell you who they were. I recognized only one of them. It was Miss Kuhlman. And every one of them seemed to be urging me to pray. Now I know this sounds crazy, but it’s all right. I don’t mind crazy because I liked what I saw.”⁷

The purpose of Kuhlman’s and the saintly host’s visitation is then explained by Hinn:

“At least fifty to seventy of them sitting in a group, and they were saying to me, ‘Pray! Ask God to

give you a healing ministry that will touch the world!’ And suddenly I heard Kathryn’s voice, and suddenly there she was — it’s crystal clear. And she in her beautiful smile, she said, ‘Ask! We’re waiting for you to ask! We’re praying with you to ask!’ And the vision disappeared.”⁸

Interestingly, video tapes of Hinn’s 1997 Honolulu Crusade are not being made available by Hinn’s ministry.⁹ Perhaps, someone more theologically astute in the faith healer’s organization realizes the occultic implications of his revelations.

On Deadly Ground

From the very inception of his ministry, Hinn has had a penchant and an obsession with the late Kuhlman. Hinn has publicly stated that Kuhlman’s grave carries a supernatural “anointing.” He alleges the same effect from the body and grave of Aimee Semple McPherson. The theatrical, twice divorced McPherson, who probably died by suicide, is hardly a model of Christian anointing.¹⁰

During a sermon on the Holy Spirit, Hinn offered the following, eerie, testimonial:

“One of the strangest experiences I had a few years ago [was] visiting Aimee’s tomb in California. This Thursday I’m on TBN. Friday I am gonna go and visit Kathryn Kuhlman’s tomb. It’s close by Aimee’s in Forest Lawn Cemetery. I’ve been there once already and every so often I like to go and pay my respects ‘cause this great woman of God has touched my life. And that grave, uh, where she’s buried is closed, they built walls around it. You can’t get in without a key and I’m one of the very few people who can get in. But I’ll never forget when I saw Aimee’s tomb. It’s incredibly dramatic. She was such a lady that her tomb has seven-foot angels bowing on each side of her tomb with a gold chain around it. As—as incredible as it is that someone would die with angels bowing on each side of her grave, I felt a terrific anointing when I was there. I actually, I—I, hear this, I trembled when I visited Aimee’s tomb. I was shaking all over. God’s power came all over me. ... I believe the anoint-

ing has lingered over Aimee’s body. I know this may be shocking to you. ... And I’m going to take David [Palmquist] and Kent [Mattox] and Sheryl [Palmquist] this week. They’re gonna come with me. You—you—you gonna feel the anointing at Aimee’s tomb. It’s incredible. And Kathryn’s. It’s amazing. I’ve heard of people healed when they visited that tomb. They were totally healed by God’s power. You say, ‘What a crazy thing.’ Brother, there’s things we’ll never understand. Are you all hearing me?”¹¹

The prophet Isaiah talked about the abomination of seeking an “anointing” and contact with the other world at a grave and called it “rebellious” and “a way that is not good” (65:2), “iniquity” and blasphemy (v. 7). He further indites those: “Who sit among the graves, and spend the night in the tombs” (v. 4). The worst of judgments are pronounced on these vile practices (vs. 13-15).

Jewish teaching was that dead bodies were unclean (for instance Numbers 19:11), but Hinn thinks otherwise. Hinn apparently has never shaken his Arab roots. Arabic people superstitiously believe in the efficacy of praying at tombs of famous or “saintly” people. Arabs regularly make pilgrimages to “venerated, holy” graves.¹² It seems Hinn has never gotten rid of the superstitions of his childhood.

A Grave Deception

Hinn tries to buttress his morbid preoccupation with graves and the dead (in the above) by referring to the Old Testament miracle of Elisha’s bones bringing a man to life. In a similar vein one could refer to manna to insist on getting free food from heaven, but it just won’t work. A close examination of the Elisha event shows no comparison or parallel to what Hinn is claiming.

The miraculous event after the death of Elisha is found in 2 Kings 13:20-21. A dead man was thrown into the tomb of Elisha and upon coming into contact with Elisha’s bones “he revived and stood up on his feet.” A careful study of the passage will note clearly four things:

1. This is a miracle of resurrection from the dead — not some nebulous feeling or quivering. There is nothing in

the verses in 2 Kings 13 about some subjective or lingering “anointing.” Hinn is not raising the dead and neither are the corpses of Kuhlman or McPherson. The Elisha event is clearly about life from death — resurrection of a body.

2. It is obviously a seal of divine attestation to Elisha’s dying prophecy regarding Joash’s victory over Syria (2 Kings 13:14-19).

3. Even though Elisha died of sickness (2 Kings 13:14) God’s approval was still on his life and death. Certainly this is contrary to the faith teachers like Hinn and others. You can be sick and die of that sickness and still have God’s favor and approval. This event contradicts and proves just the opposite of the health gospel preached by Hinn.

4. Hinn’s loose use of the passage opens the way for all kinds of weird excesses. Adam Clarke cites one of the misuses: “This is the *first*, and I believe the *last*, account of a *true miracle* performed by the bones of a dead man; and yet on it and such like the whole system of miraculous working *relics* has been founded by the popish Church.”¹³ As creation was unique, as manna was unique, as clothes that would not wear out were unique, this was a unique resurrection event. Hinn cannot claim it for validation of his trips to the graveyard.

Vision or Revision?

Hinn’s Atlanta claim of a “vision of the night” with Kuhlman and Jesus also demonstrates his blatant misuse of the vocabulary of the Bible. It is a failed attempt to make what he is practicing, somehow, appear to have justification from the Word of God. He is deceptive in this. Even a cursory look at this expression, its context, and biblical meaning demonstrates Hinn’s erroneous interpretation.

The word “vision” appears approximately 100 times in the Bible, most of which are Old Testament passages (except when referring to false prophets and false visions). The majority of these have to do with *God giving direct revelation of Himself, about Himself and His plan, or prophetic information*. It is revelatory, special, life-giving information. This information was written and inscripturated for us in the Bible. Hinn is trying to impress his followers that his extrabiblical revelation is on a

par with the inspired Scriptures.

Never, ever, when used in a positive way (of legitimate information and revelation from God) is the word "vision" ever linked with the occult or the dead. The exact phrase "visions of the night" is found in Genesis 46:2 and has to do with God revealing Himself directly to Jacob. It is not a message from the realm of the dead. Our God is the Living God. It is a message from heaven. Messages from demons and the dark underworld should not be referred to as "visions of the night." This is clear and obvious chicanery on Hinn's part.

The word "vision" in Hebrew is *marah* and literally means to "see." Jacob saw God in some form and fashion (a theophany or Christophany) and heard Him give promises and comfort. To connect this with efforts to raise funds to support one's ministry is Scripture twisting of the most horrible and pernicious kind. Shame on Hinn for this deception and distortion of God's truth. Once again Hinn has proven that he does not have even an elementary understanding of biblical interpretation.

Hinn's so-called "vision of the night" fits better into the category of Jeremiah 14:14 and 23:16:

"And the Lord said to me, the prophets prophesy lies in my name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their own heart."

"Thus says the Lord of hosts: Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; They speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the Lord."

Dark Seduction: A Grave Delusion

Perhaps Hinn's "visions" detailed in Atlanta and Hawaii are merely contrived fiction as foretold by the Apostle Peter (2 Peter 2:3). Or the tales may be the result of actual dreams or delusions and embellished for effect. Yet, a worse case scenario does exist — if he is receiving "visions" of the dead, he is in contact with demons! If the latter is true, then Paul's warning surely is being fulfilled:

"The Spirit speaks expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:1).

For all the moral failings of Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart, they did not try to introduce their followers to the world of spiritism and spiritualistic practices. Hinn has entered into a dangerous practice called necromancy which literally means *divination by consulting the dead*.¹⁴ In practicing necromancy, hidden, secret or clandestine knowledge is brought forth by someone who has died. Direction is sought from the other side. However, the Bible reveals that the real source of the information when obtained can be demonic entities or evil spirits *who imitate the dead*. This practice is at odds in every way with the Bible and the true worship of God.

A careful reading of Isaiah 8 and research into the language shows a medium being manipulated by a demon spirit. Isaiah's blunt question (v. 19) cries out for an answer: "And when they say to you seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter, should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?" The obvious answer is that God's people should never seek the dead on behalf of the living.

Bible commentator, Dr. H.A. Ironside's observation on Isaiah's words is both "prophetic" and chilling:

"It is a grievous offense in the eyes of God for anyone to turn from His revealed Word to those who profess to have power to summon the spirits of the departed in order to give light and help. Such are either charlatans deceiving those who go to them or else possessed by impersonating demons misleading all who follow them."¹⁵

Dead End

So there are numerous strong prohibitions against contacting the dead *in any fashion*. Our guidance is to come from Scripture, not the departed. The ancient pagan cultures that clashed with Israel, practiced this and other occultic abominations. To consult mediums or familiar

spirits was viewed as apostasy from God. The death penalty was required for the practice of necromancy.¹⁶

J.R. Dummelow's *A Commentary on the Holy Bible* spells out who the objects of this severe judgment are in Leviticus 19:31 with these words: "That have familiar spirits; necromancers who profess to hold communication with the dead."¹⁷

King Saul earned the death penalty as a severe judgment from God for the practice of seeking enlightenment and information from the dead. "So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he committed against the Lord, because he did not keep the word of the Lord, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance," First Chronicles 10:13 declares.

Merrill Unger captures the demonic underpinnings of necromancy:

"But mediumship and spiritism are closely connected with the ventriloquist whispers and mutterings, which the seducing demons employ in their human agents in subtle imitation of the utterances of the dead, in order thoroughly to deceive and win over their ready dupes."¹⁸

Unger also forcefully reminds us:

"If it is forbidden in the Scriptures for a child of God to resort to a 'familiar spirit,' then it is equally wrong for the departed dead, either godly or wicked, to communicate with the living. By so doing, both infringe upon the law of God."¹⁹

Indeed, a familiar spirit can be translated as the spirit of a departed family member or friend as demons convey information as if from someone close or familiar to us.

Gleanings from the Great Vine

The vigilant research of W. E. Vine on "Spirit (of the Dead), Necromancer" is worth reading in its entirety:

"The word usually represents the troubled spirit (or spirits) of the dead. This meaning appears unquestionably in Isa. 29:4 '...Thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.' Its second meaning, 'necromancer,' refers to a professional

who claims to summon forth such spirits when requested (or hired) to do so: 'Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards' (Lev. 19:31 – first occurrence). These mediums summoned their 'guides' from a hole in the ground. Saul asked the medium (witch) of Endor, 'Divine for me from the hole.'"²⁰

Vine then points out God's prohibitions:

"God forbade Israel to seek information by this means, which was so common among the pagans (Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:11). Perhaps the pagan belief in manipulating one's basic relationship to a god (or gods) explains the relative silence of the Old Testament regarding life after death. Yet God's people believed in life after death, from early times (e.g., Gen. 37:35; Isa. 14:15ff). ... Necromancers' unusual experiences do not prove that they truly had power to summon the dead. For example, the medium of Endor could not snatch Samuel out of God's hands against His wishes. But in this particular incident, it seems that God rebuked Saul's apostasy, either through a revived Samuel or through a vision of Samuel. Mediums do not have power to summon the spirits of the dead, since this is reprehensible to God and contrary to His will."²¹

The message delivered to Saul for the above practice was a message of judgment and death.

In Jesus' account of the afterlife in Luke 16 a man seeks to go back from the dead to warn others of torment. He is not permitted and told, "they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them" (v. 29). The Word of God is to be our information source for our life and ministry, not occultic pursuits.

Spiritism by Any Other Name

According to Robert Burrows of the Spiritual Counterfeits Project, full blown spiritism hit our country in the mid-1880s, beginning in New York and generated by the teenage sisters, Margaret and Katie Fox. At its height, it had ten million followers including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes. Its "central belief is implicit in the spirit contact founda-

tional to it: the dead continue to exist and communication with them is possible."²²

Spiritism went through ebbs and flows of popularity and then mutated into its modern form — channeling. Actress Shirley MacLaine is probably the most well-known endorser of channeling.

British apologist Alan Morrison traces the modern revival of necromancy through Jane Roberts:

"In the present New Age scenario, Channelling began with a vengeance with the contribution of a woman called Jane Roberts (1929-1984). In 1963, she and her husband had begun to experiment with an ouija-board and they were soon contacted by an alleged spirit-entity calling itself *Seth*. Within a short time, she found she could go into a trance during which this spirit-being would speak through her. This led to a series of best-selling books in which a great deal of occult information about every aspect of life — past, present and future — is presented in a readable style. Interestingly, it is common for these spirit-entities which channel through humans to adopt a biblical name. Whether this is the case with Jane Roberts' 'Seth' is not immediately apparent. ... Other well-known channelling [sic] works are Virginia Essene's 'New Teachings for an Awakening Humanity', and Amy Brown Loomis' channelled messages which were alleged to be from Jesus Christ and several of the Apostles. By far the best known and most popular of all the New Age channelled works is the 1200-page book, 'A Course in Miracles'."²³

Spiritists have "churches" in which they practice seances and other occultic specialties. *They even claim healings and prophecies* and have joined together under the umbrella of the National Spiritualist Association. The N.S.A. lists as one of its nine principles:

"5. We affirm that communication with the so-called dead is a fact scientifically proven by the phenomena of Spiritualism."²⁴

Hinn would fit better with the N.S.A. than anywhere else.

J. Stafford Wright reminds us:

"If for a moment we consider what the Bible says about attempting to communicate with the departed, we may be astonished to find that, whenever this is mentioned, it is condemned as something evil. ... The Christian similarly is not to aim at gathering information from the departed, but at hearing the message of Christ. ... It is clear that the Biblical verdict on Spiritualism is completely hostile. One may assume that the reason is because the deception (conscious or unconscious) that is inherent in it. There may, in fact, be two sources of deception. 1. *The unconscious mind of the medium*. ... The sitter cannot be certain of being in touch with the one who has passed on, for the medium may in fact be interpreting a projected image from the sitter's own mind. 2. A more dangerous deception would arise if we suppose *the intervention of evil spirits*. Spiritualists themselves recognize this possibility."²⁵

Hinn's move in the direction of the occult should not be a surprise. The modern-day Pentecostal movement, which began in 1906, has muddled beginnings and a prior history of involvement in spiritism. Azusa Street drew in spiritualists and mediums and contemporaries of that day were reporting seances, trances and other outlandish and occultic behavior.²⁶ Once the door of unrestrained subjective mysticism is opened, Satan and the flesh can have a field day. God's Word is our *only* protection against the demonic as well as ourselves.

In all of this, Hinn moves toward the worst groups in history. He even, knowingly or unknowingly, mirrors in himself and his following the bizarre Convulsionaries of the 18th century whose focus was tombs and miracles:

"Groups of visitors to the tomb were gripped by uncontrollable urges to dance or fall into seizures. In these states the 'convulsionaires', as they came to be called, seemed to lose contact with the external world, even to the point of becoming insensitive to pain. They had religious visions and reported miraculous healings. On one occasion, a skeptic who came to the tomb to mock the proceedings found herself struck with paraly-

Back to Basics

How many more dead people will Hinn report "visions" of? Hinn has yet spun another yarn as he has so often or is being duped by demons. God's Word leaves him no other options. Either choice ushers his followers into deep deception and may well give them leave to seek such encounters from the other side. In either case, Hinn needs to repent before God and seek the forgiveness of the body of Christ. Following that, he needs to step down and enroll in some basic doctrine courses and stop his overt approval of the occult.

Hinn, in the recent past resigned from the Assemblies of God denomination. Following his resignation he returned to being accountable and answerable to no one but himself. His new attraction and "ride" is a ride that can lead his faithful to darkness and destruction. These followers need to get off quickly and stay off. The truth is out. But will even the truth be able to convince the emotion intoxicated followers?

Endnotes:

1. Benny Hinn, *This Is Your Day*, June 11, 1997, video tape on file.

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Benny Hinn, Honolulu Crusade, February 28, 1997. Transcript of Hinn's comments made by Mike Oppenheimer, Let Us Reason Ministries. Audio tape and transcript on file.
5. Ibid., emphasis added.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Phone call from M. Kurt Goedelman to Benny Hinn Media Ministries, July 25, 1997, confirmed that Hinn's organization is not making available, nor will be making available, tapes from the 1997 Honolulu Crusade.
10. See Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997, pp. 168-169.
11. Benny Hinn sermon, *Double Portion Anointing*, Part #3, Orlando Christian Center, Orlando, Fla., April 7, 1991. From the series, *Holy Ghost Invasion*. TV#309, tape on file.
12. Israel Pocket Library, *Religious Life and Communities*. Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Books, 1974, pg. 154.
13. Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible with a Commentary and Critical Notes*. New York: Abingdon Press, no date, The Old Testament, Vol. 2, pg. 525, commentary note on 2 Kings 13:21.
14. See further *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Vol. 4, pg. 401 and *Biblical Demonology* by Merrill Unger, pp. 143-164.

15. Henry A. Ironside, *Expository Notes on the Prophet Isaiah*. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1952, pp. 55-56.
16. See for example, Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deuteronomy 18:10-11.
17. J.R. Dummelow, *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1958, pg. 97.
18. Merrill Unger, *Biblical Demonology*. Wheaton, Ill.: Scripture Press, 1952, pg. 148.
19. Ibid., pg. 152.
20. W.E. Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary Of Old And New Testament Words*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985, pp. 241-242, 1 Samuel 28:8, author's translation.
21. Ibid., pg. 242.
22. J.D. Douglas, Editor, *New 20th-Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1991, pg. 782.
23. Alan Morrison, *The Serpent and the Cross*. Birmingham, England: K&M Books, 1994, pg. 142.
24. Frank S. Mead, *Handbook of Denominations in the United States*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1965, pg. 206.
25. J. Stafford Wright, *Man in the Process of Time*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956, pp. 107, 109-110, italics in original.
26. *Counterfeit Revival*, op. cit., pp. 127-128.
27. Leonard George, Ph.D., *Alternative Realities*. New York: Facts on File, 1995, pg. 55.

RODNEY HOWARD-BROWNE

(continued from page 4)

unexpected and motivated me to examine, search and compare their teachings and methods with an in-depth study of the Scriptures. We're told to "test all things, holding fast what is good" (2 Thessalonians 5:21).

Jesus tells us that some will prophesy, cast out demons, and do many wonders in His name (Matthew 7:22), but in spite of that Christ will declare, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness" (v. 23). Several times the Lord warns the believers about great deception (Matthew 24:4, 5, 11, 24). Paul warned the church of Ephesus for three years against savage wolves who speak perverse or misleading things (Acts 20:28-31). In his second epistle to the Corinthians, Paul writes, "For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God" (2:17), and "we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling

the word of God deceitfully" (4:2). Evidently, there are some who adulterate the Word of God for their own gain and benefits.

In a meaningful passage Jesus states, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves" (Matthew 7:15). They look Christian! But inwardly, they are hungry and greedy for something you have! And Paul exposes false apostles, deceitful workers as being individuals who transform themselves into apostles of Christ, into ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Peter and John have also found it important to write on the subject. It is therefore important today for believers to be watchful and aware of these facts.

One whose works must be tested is Rodney Howard-Browne. Howard-Browne is the prominent leader of the "laughter phenomenon." I first encountered him in the fall of 1992 when he ministered at the Orlando Christian

Center (now World Outreach Center), the church founded and pastored by faith healer Benny Hinn. The early 1990s was Howard-Browne's debut in the United States. More recently, a second opportunity to see him in action presented itself in the city of Vancouver, British Columbia. From Nov. 19 through 23, 1996, he held a series of meetings which my son, Stephen, and I decided to investigate.

Howard-Browne is a South African preacher who says he was saved at age 5, baptized in the Spirit at 8, and received a special touch from heaven many years later in 1979. But it was only in 1989, while being in New York, that he decided to put his knack into practice. His laughter ministry was born.

More than once during the crusade held in a 2,000-seat church auditorium, a member of Howard-Browne's organization warned the audience early in the service not to bring in any camera or tape recorders because "they can be