

Hillsong Founder Brian Houston: Can He Make a Ministry Comeback?

After a string of legal problems, mysterious accusations and the stunning ouster from his own church in Sydney, Australia, Brian Houston, founder of global megachurch Hillsong, along with his wife, Bobbie, is in the process of making a comeback. In July, Houston launched a new online church called .

Is Houston simply misunderstood? Did he make a few errors in judgment while under immense stress over the serious allegations related to his father's tenure? Can he be trusted in ministry leadership again? Despite the exercise of his faith and best intentions, will Houston's past define his future in ministry?

"Don't ever write off a comeback. God is good at those," Houston posted earlier this year on X, soon after announcing the plan to launch their new online ministry.

Season of Scandal and Cleansing

The return of Brian Houston to the ministry scene comes at an interesting time. Just within the past several months, several high-profile Christian ministers have fallen into scandals that have led to their departures from their churches. The list includes Mike Bickle, followed by Tony Evans and Robert Morris, this latter few located in Dallas, Texas, in what used to be known as the "Bible Belt." The age of the celebrity pastor may be over, especially as people—Christians and non-Christians alike—are skeptical of pastors who are more interested in their own celebrity, brand building and social media followers in the hundreds of thousands than in ministering Jesus to people and living right before the Lord.

However, Houston may fit well in this blossoming post-celebrity pastor era because he has consistently focused his ministry on Jesus, and he has a track record of approaching challenges as a leader, not as an influencer seeking fame. He isn't necessarily trying to build Hillsong 2.0. God is doing a new thing.

New Ministry on the Launch Pad

The launch of marks the return of this megachurch pioneer to active ministry-building, following his departure from Hillsong in 2022. Two years ago, it looked like Houston was done in ministry permanently. He was accused of not disclosing information about offenses committed by his father. It has been publicly reported that Frank Houston used his position in ministry allegedly to abuse youths in the 1970s. Unlike disgraced ex-Hillsong minister Carl Lentz, who turned his celebrity pastor status into extramarital affairs, Houston has not been accused in any similar manner. His wife, Bobbie, continues to stand by him—loyalty that the former senior pastor of Hillsong Church cannot take for granted.

“You learn a lot about people in your tough times,” Houston tweeted.

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Multitudes of people turned against Houston and even people close to him in ministry turned their backs on him for failed leadership and were unwilling to see his side of the story. But Houston has remained adamant in his faith in Christ. He has signaled publicly that he has every intention to reestablish himself as the leader of a ministry.

The people who wrote him off during tough times may owe him an apology. In August 2023, an Australian court acquitted Houston, validating that he had a “reasonable excuse” under

the law not to disclose the accusations against his father Frank, who died in 2004.

Never known to make ministry about himself, Houston has publicly stated that the focus of his new ministry is “pointing to Jesus and seeing people become followers of Jesus.” He shared online about how he is “very excited about our online community ... building community ... connecting Jesus followers and building disciples.”

An online church makes a ton of sense for Brian and Bobbie Houston, who are in a rebuilding phase despite being at an age when most ministers are beginning to think of retiring; Brian is 70, Bobbie 67. It is a season in which the Houstons are starting over, partly by necessity to earn a living after having their financial coffers drained by legal expenses, but also and more importantly as a call from God.

The ministry’s official website, , states: “ is here to welcome and extend our table of life and experience to you. This online platform (and church) is here to love, encourage and be a trustworthy voice of hope and inspiration in the days ahead. Our heart is to serve the God-given potential within you and the body of Christ.” The website calls out a biblical reference to provide context: “As Ephesians 2:21-22 says, we are all being built into a holy habitation for the living God, brick by brick, stone by stone, with Jesus Christ as the Chief Cornerstone.”

as an online church initiative is envisioned as a platform that provides a digital environment for worship, community and spiritual growth. The online church features regular livestreamed services, including worship sessions, sermons and interactive components designed to engage viewers from around the world. includes:

- **Live Streaming services.** Regularly scheduled live services that include worship music and sermons.

– **On-demand content.** Access to a library of past sermons, teachings and worship sessions.

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– **Interactive features.** Opportunities for viewers to engage through chat, prayer requests and virtual small groups.

– **Global community.** Aimed at reaching a worldwide audience, fostering a sense of community among believers from different regions.

– **Focus on accessibility:** Designed to be accessible to people regardless of their location, allowing anyone with an internet connection to participate.

Brian Houston's vision for is to create a dynamic and inclusive online space where people can connect with their faith and with each other, regardless of geographic barriers. Nonetheless, with being an online church, Houston won't have to worry about any construction materials to build a brick-and-mortar church. He is using advanced digital technologies to reach the whole world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What's Next for Brian Houston?

One of the remarkable characteristics of Houston is that he is trying to pick up where he left off at his former church and avoid allowing shame to take over his life. If he feels that he was attacked by other people when he was down, he is not ashamed to say that faith in Jesus is the "greatest weapon." Houston tweeted in early July, "Stay strong in the face of trouble. Jesus said He has overcome the world."

While in the early days of a newly launched online ministry, Houston is hard at work on his other new project, a book about his life slated for release in early 2025. In it, Houston

would have the chance to recount his side of the story, the accusations that have beset his life and ultimately the shocking departure from Hillsong Church.

Ultimately, God knows Brian Houston's heart, but if he reveals his true character going forward, there is an opportunity for Houston's future to redefine the widespread perceptions of his past. Rather than "falling from grace" as so many high-profile pastors have in recent months and even weeks, Houston may be falling into grace. God's power is often magnified through brokenness.

Little do we know to what extent spiritual warfare has hammered away at him for the years before and during his building one of the most influential churches in the world. Having gone through adversity after adversity, Houston has been tested in the extreme. And the next test may just be how far he can take the new into a world starving for the living Word of God and the life-changing power of His Holy Spirit.

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This article has been updated to remove T.D. Jakes' name. A previous version incorrectly stated that he departed his church. T.D. Jakes remains the senior pastor of The Potter' House.

Street Preacher Shot in Head Calls Survival a 'Miracle' in

First Interview

An Arizona pastor shot in the head while street preaching last year is speaking out and thanking God for his miraculous survival.

“It’s a miracle – absolutely a miracle,” Hans Schmidt told KNXV-TV of the ordeal. “I should not be alive. Realistically, I should be dead. And because of His grace and His love, I’m still here.”

As CBN News previously reported, Schmidt, a 26-year-old dad of two, a military combat veteran, and the outreach director at Victory Chapel First Phoenix in Arizona, was taken to the hospital Nov. 15, 2023, on suspicion of having been assaulted.

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But a CT scan revealed he had been shot in the head. Schmidt’s condition quickly deteriorated, as his family prayed for a miracle and implored others to do the same.

Schmidt’s wife, Zulya, told CBN News late last year about the events surrounding the shocking ordeal, noting the shooting unfolded while Hans was street preaching as he has frequently done.



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“He’s been doing that for over a year, and, usually, he street preaches for 30 minutes before every evening service for our church,” she said. “That day, he just ended street preaching early, and I thought that was odd.”

Uniting the house together instead of dividing it and separating it is one the basic principles Jesus taught us. For Christians, it is our job as the body of Christ to see the importance of all parts of Christ's body, just as Paul reminds us to do so. This is vital in a world riddled with censorship around every turn.

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Candace Cameron Bure Discusses Her Past Regret of Playing a Witch

It's the eternal struggle for Christian actors in Hollywood: Just how far do you go when it comes to representing something that goes against your faith?

Some, like perennial movie villain Neal McDonough, will go so far as to even refuse to do any kiss scenes with an actress.

(McDonough, a happily married Christian, claims Hollywood has blackballed him for that steadfast refusal.)

Others, like modern movie star Chris Pratt, simply choose to proudly tout their faith and spread the word of God through a large platform, while working for places – like Disney – that don't always align with a Christian world viewpoint, but

provide said platform.

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And then there are outspoken Christians like star actress Candace Cameron Bure, whose status as a child actress adds some nuance to the original question.

That's because Bure now has the hindsight to more critically observe the roles she took in the past, and there's one small role that she doesn't think she would ever take again.

Speaking on the Aug. 11 episode of "Pod Meets World," a pop culture podcast run by the alum of beloved 1990s sitcom "Boy Meets World," Bure opened up about the time she made a guest appearance on the show.

Bure is perhaps best known for her portrayal of D.J. Tanner in fellow 1990s sitcom "Full House."

The longtime actress appeared in episode five of the fifth season of "Boy Meets World," entitled "The Witches of Pennbrook." Debuting in 1997, the episode featured Bure portraying Millie the witch, who was trying to seduce one of the male main characters to steal his soul, and use it to resurrect some demon lord.

In short, it's decidedly something that goes against much of what Bure's faith stands for.

And she's aware of it.

"I remember when they asked me if I would feel comfortable, and they asked me to do that part, and they were like, 'How do you feel about playing a witch?'" Bure recounted. "And I was like, 'Well, I'm an actress, like [it's] totally fine. This is fun. It's sitcom. It's great comedy. I'm good with that. So yeah, came in just feeling really fun."

“But now, watching the episode ... like, huh.”

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Later on in the conversation, podcast co-host Danielle Fishel broached the topic of the role, but specifically from the angle of Bure’s faith.

“Now we’ve alluded to it a little bit by talking about how it feels different looking back at it retroactively,” Fishel began. “You are very vocal about your faith and your values and how much they play a pivotal role in the jobs you act in and the jobs you produce.



To pre-order John Ramirez’s new book, “Exposing the Devil’s Playbook,” visit .

“Would you, if you were offered a role like that today, would you take it? Or do you think that’s something you pass on?”

“Here’s what I always say. I am an actor,” Bure said. “I’m not looking to play myself, right. So if there was a part that called for the evil witch, but it was redemptive at the end?”

“That’s what I’m always looking for in my storytelling and stories of faith, whether they have faith or not. I just want redemption. So if the through line was like, ‘Evil is good, let’s keep practicing this,’ my answer would be, no.”

The podcast then collectively mused on what happened in that episode, before coming to the conclusion that Millie had no such redemption. She simply failed, and theoretically could move on to the next teenage boy’s soul.

Because of that, Bure claimed that she would “probably not” take the role today.

The wide-ranging podcast discussed a number of other topics, including the awkwardness Fishel and Bure both experienced when their respective sitcoms filmed episodes focused on their weight.

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Contending for Truth in the Season of the Dragon

“Some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God’s marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (Jude 4, NLT).

It is right there in Jude’s epistle. This present season is not a surprise to God. But as we draw closer to the end of days, the dragon spirit encroaches further into the world. This verse captures the danger of moral and doctrinal corruption within the church itself, a message that holds great relevance for the chaotic and morally fractured world we live in today. Jude’s message is warning the world about false teachers who infiltrate the community of believers, distorting the message of grace to justify sin and immorality.

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This deception is not new. It was already condemned long ago. Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, is not concerned only with those who sin. He is aiming the sword of truth squarely at everyone who deliberately misuses—exploits, distorts, perverts—the message of grace purchased with the blood of Christ. It gives license to destructive behavior, becoming one of the main challenges the church faces in the tumultuous moral landscape of the 21st century.



To pre-order Jonathan Cahn's newest book, "The Dragon's Prophecy," visit .

We live in a time when moral confusion is rampant. Traditional boundaries that once guided personal and societal behavior have been blurred, even eradicated, in misguided notions of "progress" or "tolerance." This is driven by the spreading dragon spirit sowing confusion and chaos. Objective truth is often abandoned in favor of subjective feelings and relative morality. What was once considered immoral is now increasingly accepted or even celebrated.

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This moral shift impacts not only the secular world, but it has also made its way into the church. In recent years, some voices within the church have embraced doctrines that align more with prevailing cultural attitudes than the truth of the gospel. Sometimes this phenomenon is somewhat innocent, deriving from an initial effort toward crafting a church atmosphere that is more seeker-friendly, honestly endeavoring to share the Good News.

But it echoes Jude's warning on false teachers who "worm their way into" the church. The heart of the issue is the distortion of God's grace—unmerited favor that provides unearnable

forgiveness and salvation through Jesus Christ. It is the cornerstone of the Christian faith, our path to redemption restoring our relationship with God. However, just as in Jude's time, there are those who twist the message of grace into something it was never meant to be. Instead of grace being lived as a means to repentance and holy living, some turn it into justification for living an "anything goes" lifestyle contrary to God's commands. But it remains the essence of Jude's warning—grace does not give us a free pass to sin.

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Jamie Buckingham on Slowing Down, Hearing From God

Even my wife (especially my wife) knew I was going too fast. Like a speeding train, I whistled through grade crossings and roared over trestles only moments before they collapsed (thanking God I had made it just in time—never thinking it might have been my excess speed that caused the fall) and sped by passenger stations, too busy even to wave at the friendly folk gathered near the track, much less have time to stop and pick them up.

It's a syndrome that attacks many. Too many of God's servants who are always busy, busy, busy working in the Lord's vineyard. But after all, we've got to get all those grapes picked before Jesus comes.

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Then suddenly I was down. Flat on my back, my right leg elevated to prevent the blood clots in my shin from surging through my veins and doing the unspeakable to my heart and lungs.

My trip to South Africa with other American “spiritual giants” for the key conference was off. The doctors said I couldn’t even go downstairs to eat with my family, much less circle the globe.

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I was down for almost three weeks, a strange and mysterious time. Everything in my body was working fine except for that blood clot. I had lots of time to consider the ways of the Lord and sort through His priorities in my life.

You just can’t do that, I now understand, when you’re always on the move.

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