

Was Money at the Root of Sam Hinn's Rapid-Fire Restoration?

***Editor's note:** Prophetic author Jennifer LeClaire sounds the alarm on key issues impacting the church and society through her bold writing. Sign up today to stay informed and join her as a "watchman on the wall" interceding for these times. Click [here](#) to sign up for the newsletter.*

After a four-year affair and an eight-month restoration process, **Sam Hinn**, the brother of evangelist **Benny Hinn**, was re-ordained into the ministry on Sunday night at Bishop Mark Chironna's Church on the Living Edge.

Although there have been other controversial restorations in the past—Jimmy Swaggart, Paul Cain and Todd Bentley are a few that come to mind—Hinn's re-ordination is causing many in the body of Christ to take a closer look at what's going on behind the scenes.

- Why the rush back to ministry after a four-year affair?
- Is this a symptom of the hypergrace movement?
- Did money have something to do with it?

"I have to confess that when I heard about the plans to re-ordain Sam, I was upset. I told one of my ministry colleagues, 'This is a joke and makes a mockery out of everything I hold dear and have spent my life proclaiming and upholding,'" wrote Pastor Ron Johnson, who was charged with overseeing Hinn's **restoration** process.

"I outlined a two-year plan of **restoration** and walked through the initial stages with him. But after three months, Sam wanted to renegotiate the terms. When I wouldn't agree to that, he withdrew from my covering and has since found a group

of men willing to endorse his leadership in a more expeditious manner.”

So what’s going on here?

Clearly, there’s a strong disagreement among well-known leaders in the body of Christ over whether this man should have been released back into public ministry so quickly. In an age of the **hypergrace movement**—which is full of dangerous errors, such as denying the need for true repentance—re-ordaining a man who admitted to a four-year affair after less than a year smacks of grace wrongly applied. Grace (and **forgiveness**) is one thing. Restoring trust is another.

Noteworthy is the dichotomy of responses to Hinn’s restoration among lay believers and clergy alike. Some believe it was too soon. Others pull the legalistic card on anyone who suggests it was too soon. Still others point to money motivations. Let’s look at some of the Facebook responses to Johnson’s article:

“Look how the ‘Christian population’ treated Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker. Yes, they did sin. Do you see them on TBN? Daystar? You will see Sam Hinn. It is disgusting. This is the reason so many good and decent Christians have stopped going to church,” Verla Toney wrote.

“Where in the Bible is this 2 year to restore thing? That’s an AG thing. Six weeks after Peter had a moral failure, he was having the first gospel crusade in history,” commented Peter A Vandever.

Beth Rank said, “Sam has shown by his actions that he is still in rebellion and not ready for ministry. I think the author has rightly discerned the situation and has done all that he could to help Sam. The men who have re-ordained Sam have done him a great disservice and will have to answer to a holy God because of it. These things are very, very serious ... see 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:5-11.”

"Who are we to judge? Leave that to God. He that is without sin cast the first stone? God is merciful," noted Janis J Shepherd Harewood.

"When a minister has broken trust like this, it takes a lot of time to rebuild trust ... even in his own family and marriage. It seems like when they want to rush back into ministry, they are caring more about how this has affected them instead of the impact it has had on those closest to him and the body of Christ. Ministry isn't about the minister. It is about serving God's people. Ministers who have failed should not be rushed back into the limelight!!!" Annette Houtz Compton wrote.

"How soon should a pastor be restored after falling into sin? How long does it take God to forgive one who repents of his sin?" commented Bishop Rodney Sanders.

"Narcissism at its finest these days. Holiness has been put on the shelf & out comes hyper grace. We need to get back to the fear of God (& this incident scares the mud out of me) instead of the fear & worship of man," Bonnie Curry Stempel noted.

"Does God expect 2 years of groveling at the AofG? Or can God bring fruits of repentance in one single ALTER CALL OF POWER? From how I read this article he refused 2 years of his life being under the scrutiny of how bad he has been. God restores and give grace and mercy. Seems like he refused the AofG recommended penance of walking on his knees at their temple," said Kris Koskella.

"He can't wait to be restored. After all, there's money to be made ... is how tons of ppl are gonna read this," speculated Laura Vernon Bull.

The divided responses show a divided body of Christ—and it also shows that there needs to be more discussion around **how to restore a fallen leader**. Sam Hinn wasn't the first leader to fall, and he won't be the last. I am grateful for Ron Johnson's boldness to come out with a part of the story we

would otherwise never have known—and in doing so starting a much-needed dialogue.

Personally, I believe a four-year affair requires more than an eight-month restoration process. And if Johnson, who has known Hinn for 30 years and has been involved in successfully **restoring fallen ministers** in the past, prayerfully laid out a two-year plan, then I believe it was necessary. As Johnson noted in his article, restoration is not only about forgiveness; it's also about trust.

So what's going on here? I don't think this is a hypergrace error, but neither do I wonder why so many folks think money ultimately drove Hinn back into ministry just a few months after admitting to long-term sexual immorality. Hinn needs money to live. Whatever motivated Chironna and Archbishop Lonnie Langston to re-ordain him so quickly, we can only pray that he doesn't fall again and hurt more people in the rush back to ministry.

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