

Mike Winger Says Benny Hinn Is Not a Christian During Interview With Charisma

Christian YouTuber Mike Winger, who is an ordained pastor but not currently shepherding a church, recently spoke with Charisma Media's John Matarazzo about his four-hour video, titled "The Victims of Benny Hinn: 30 years of Spiritual Deception."

Seventeen days after posting his viral video, Winger shared in a separate video that Hinn was attempting to get his video, which has over 900,000 views, removed from YouTube. In the four-hour video, Winger argued that Hinn has been financially and spiritually abusive throughout his years of ministry.

Winger's interview with Charisma comes after Charisma posted a two-part interview with Hinn. Matarazzo said, "We're trying to platform voices the best way that we can as we see God moving."

"You are not an anti-charismatic-heresy-hunter, but you are a Continuationist," Matarazzo told Winger.

Winger shared that his ministry consists of answering "tough questions about the Bible" and "verse by verse teaching" online, with the occasional topical discussion, like the one he posted regarding Hinn.

Winger told Matarazzo that many people have assumed he is a Cessationist because of his criticism of Hinn. But there is a "fundamental flaw" when "people will unintentionally think that criticism toward a Charismatic leader is criticism of the gifts," Winger said.

"I believe in prophecy, tongues, all of those things," he added. "I think there's something that God has for believers,

and I'm eager to have them. I think about what Scripture tells me about the desire to prophesy, I pray for prophetic things to happen and stuff like that in the church that are genuine and real.

"But," Winger continued, "I also affirm Scripture when it says test all things [and] hold fast to that which is good, that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, that there will never be fakery in the Christian church ... and so I'm zealous for that."

Later in the interview, Matarazzo asked Winger if he believes Hinn is a Christian. Winger replied by saying that he doesn't usually "weigh in on" that type of question. However, he added that he has done so in the past, most notably with Joel Osteen, whom Winger believes is misguided but still a Christian.

"But when it came to Benny Hinn, I don't have that confidence at all," he said. Winger elaborated, "God is the judge ... I'm not actually judging. I'm not sending him anywhere."

"[But] the layers of deception, the consistency of that deception that goes on," Winger said, "not only things he believes, but things he is actively partaking in massively deceiving large groups of people that is so inconsistent with a Christian, that it's hard to believe that he really is [a Christian]."

Winger clarified, "By God's grace I hope he is." But he added, "I think that he has the marks of a false teacher of the people in 1 Peter."

Winger said that he made his video about Hinn after receiving a question about whether he believed Hinn was sincere when he apologized for preaching bad theology.

"I'm sorry to say that prosperity has gone a little crazy, and I'm correcting my own theology," Hinn said in 2019.

Winger chose not to answer the question at the time because he wanted to wait and see if Hinn would change.

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“Well, four years went by, and I hadn’t talked about it and at some point I thought, you know, now’s a good time to go ahead and address this issue,” Winger told Matarazzo. He said that clips of Hinn had been “surfacing, showing that [Hinn] was doing the same stuff again.”

Winger said, “Very bad stuff. And when I say bad stuff, I don’t mean making mistakes. I mean targeting the poor, talking them into giving you their last penny, even if they’re already in debt.”

“That’s [Hinn’s] specific instruction,” Winger added. “Give all your money, even if you’re already in debt and then God will pay off your debts for you. This is the exact same stuff that he in 2019 said ‘grieves the Holy Spirit and it didn’t work and it hurt people.’

“He’s doing it again now,” Winger said.

Winger explained that in one video, an announcer on stage can be heard yelling, “She’s perfectly healed! God healed her today.” But then the video shows the woman saying, “Benny, I’m not. I’m hurting. I’m in pain.” Winger said that Hinn then “pulls the microphone away so you don’t hear her or they dubbed some fake guy speaking in tongues over that spot in the video ... This is like deliberate deception.

“It makes me mad,” Winger said. “I got mad. I saw their faces. I see this woman who’s got cancer and he’s pushing her down and hurting her onstage and then putting it on camera.

“I found so much more content and it was so much worse than I thought that I felt that there needed to be a red flag,” he

explained. Winger said he discovered that Hinn is “surging in popularity” in places like Africa, which made Winger want to warn others about him.

“I care about my brothers and sisters,” Winger said. “A lot of people think this is about Benny Hinn. It’s not. It’s about the Christians. This is about the non-believers watching. This is about everybody but Benny Hinn.

“It’s like when you’re trying to cure a disease. It’s not about the disease. It’s about the people that are infected,” Winger added. “I’m worried about the people being influenced and hurt and harmed by what Benny is doing and people who are copying him and propagate the same harms.”

Winger believes that some people have been healed at Hinn’s services. But he said he doesn’t want them to believe those healings had anything to do with Hinn or his ministry. “That’s the mistake that they’re making,” he said.

“Benny Hinn takes people [and] makes props of them, fakes that more of them are healed than really are healed. [Hinn] tries to play games with it, makes promises about money that aren’t true,” Winger claimed. “Milks the poor and then walks away with a bunch of money and harm that he has caused with obvious fakery that the world can see right through, even if a lot of believers can’t.

“Hinn needs to have a real accounting of his finances and his ministry,” Winger said. “He would need to be open about the deceptions that he’s perpetrated in the name of healing. He has to be open about that.

“It would ruin him,” he added. “It would ruin his reputation, but it would save his soul, I believe, so it would be a beautiful, wonderful thing. And I will be the first one lining up to give him a hug and be so happy that he had real repentance going on.”

Matarazzo played a clip from Hinn's latest interview he did with Charisma's Stephen Strang. In it, Hinn said:

I came to the conclusion in 2019 that I did not want to be a part of the gimmickry of it. But sadly, I let pressure get to me. And because of that pressure, I said things and did things I should not have done. And for that really I am sorry. And I ask the people watching us to really forgive me for that. And I'm striving with all my heart to be as biblical as possible with that.

Matarazzo asked Winger if he believed Hinn was really asking for forgiveness.

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"What did [Hinn] repent of specifically right there," Winger replied, "it's almost like you have to fill in the blanks yourself.

"The only word he used there that was kind of specific was the word gimmickry," he continued. "So that I gotta go, 'Oh, gimmickry.' So maybe whatever I think of as gimmickry in prosperity gospel, that's what he repented of.

"But even this week on his YouTube channel," Winger said, "he's telling people that if they give money to his ministry, God will give them much more money in return.

"That's gimmickry. That's not biblical. That's not how it works," Winger stated. "We should not be giving to get. We should be giving to give."

In another clip, Hinn said:

I'm a human being. I've made mistakes. We all make mistakes. The two things that I regret most in ministry: I was not too

wise with prophecy. There were times when I thought God had showed me something that he wasn't ... and I spoke it out. And sadly—and I wish I can go back and fix it—but sadly, there were some promises I gave that were not accurate or from the Lord. But who's perfect? And for that, of course, I ask people to forgive me. I'm just human and made mistakes like that, and I'll probably make them again, I suppose, down the road because I'm not perfect.

“Does the Bible ever teach false prophecy as simply a mistake? No, it really doesn't,” Winger responded. “It is not OK. If you falsely prophesy, that is definitely not OK. That is not allowable. Something's very wrong. If you go, ‘God told me,’ and you say something God didn't tell you, there's something very concerning about that.”

Winger added that Hinn's words seem to be a request for a “constant blanket of forgiveness” while he continues to “do things wrongly.”

Winger told Matarazzo that real repentance would [look] like this: “Guys, I have spoken in God's name so many times, and I was wrong. I will never do that again. I will never speak in God's name again. You can't trust me. We're gonna take down my videos. We're gonna end this ministry.

“That would be a sober and mature and a right way to respond, and I'd be very gracious and loving and happy to hear him say some things like that,” Winger added.

Hinn's recent apology “is not real,” Winger claimed. “This is fake.”

Winger proceeded to say that the questions Strang asked Hinn were “softball” questions. “Stephen Strang has been [Hinn's] go-to guy for years for this stuff,” he said, alleging that Hinn only did the interview after he failed to have Winger's video removed from YouTube.

Matarazzo praised Winger for pointing out the things he discovered about Hinn, saying, "It's really important, you know. Whether somebody is for Benny Hinn or not, you know, these issues need to be addressed."

Winger warned Christians that "if we prop up fake stuff in the name of God, it's going to have harms that we can't even conceive of...renounce all of the fake.

"If we will demand real Bible teaching and demand real, authentic pastors and leaders who have accountability, who have godly character, who aren't money grabbers, and who don't drive the nicest car in the church," Winger encouraged, "if we demand those things, then we're going to see a building of the body of Christ and a greater witness to the world."

At the end of the interview, Winger prayed for Hinn, as well as those who have been hurt by him, asking God to "open [Hinn's] eyes" to "real grace and forgiveness and restoration ... that we would see true and genuine repentance" and "rejoice in the grace of God."

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