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29 January 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

Grace Gospel Church

Over the course of the last two months I have been approached by several parents concerned about the influence of Grace Gospel Church over their children. These children are young adults ranging from 18 to 20 years of age who have become increasingly involved in the life of the aforementioned church. Grace Gospel Church is led by Basil O'Connell-Jones and is a "partner church" of Church Team Ministries International (CTMI) which in turn is led by Miki Hardy, and based in Curepipe in Mauritius. As the involvement of the young people in this organisation has increased, their behaviour has changed - becoming obsessive, negative and destructive. I have met with some of the young people, representatives of Grace Gospel Church, and have also been shown relevant correspondence. The following negative behavioural changes have been observed to a greater or lesser extent in each of the young people's lives:

- An increasing involvement in the life of Grace Gospel Church to the detriment and exclusion of previously held hobbies, commitments, friends and ultimately of the individual's family;
- A dramatic change in study and career plans usually in favour of study or work for CTMI;
- A loss of independent and critical reasoning;
- Uncharacteristically stilted conversation heavily dependent on church jargon and discourse;
- A flattened and artificial affect: i.e. non-spontaneous "robotic" emotional responses;
- Growing arrogance and judgmental attitudes towards people outside of their church to the extent of paranoia;
- Growing deceitfulness;
- Increasing aggression in response to being challenged about the church;
- An obsessive conviction to move to CTMI's building project in Trianon, Mauritius.

Church Team Ministries International claims an authority and validity for their organisation that is not substantiated by the theology of the historic Christian Church or the contemporary Church itself. It advocates an unbalanced theology which depersonalises and disempowers individuals. Currently there are several church leaders in Durban who have spoken out against the ministry of this organisation and Grace Gospel Church, and there is growing unease among schools whose pupils have come under the influence of CTMI. At best CTMI could be

described as a sectarian group, and at worst as a cult. There is justification in using the term “cult” as the young people I have worked with exhibit symptoms of extreme and unhealthy indoctrination.

Basil O’Connel-Jones and Miki Hardy have been made aware of the damage they are causing to the young people I have met but they fail to accept that what they are doing is unhealthy or irresponsible.

I am deeply concerned about the influence Grace Gospel Church and Church Team Ministries International have particularly over the psychologically vulnerable and spiritually immature. If a tree is to be judged by its fruit, then this church must be judged for its reckless damage to family life, its negative manipulation of the impressionable and its isolating and arrogant spirituality.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss any of the above points.

Yours faithfully

Sean Semple