

I want to say that I am in anguish for what has happened between me and one of my best and longest standing friends and the state that our relationship has found itself. My one desire is to see my brother extricated from the group CTMI and restored to fellowship with the wider body of Christ.

I have been a very close friend of Basil's for almost 40 years. We lived together in a "mess" during the Rhodesian war. When he was shot I was at the hospital when he came out of surgery. I determined to visit him each and every day for as long as it took, and did. He could not speak for months and I fulfilled my desire to be with my friend and did not miss one day for the 9 or so months that he was in rehab.

Basil led me and Michele to the Lord. He has been a part of my life since I was 17 and throughout my Christian walk. I have seen him get mixed up in some pretty weird doctrines and movements in the past and God has delivered him from these. I trust that He will deliver him from this one too.

I firmly believe that the role played by the leaders of CTMI, the work of the enemy, and the very active part played by certain people has turned my brother away from the humility and love that he once displayed to such great effect and hardened his heart and for this my prayer is to the Lord to restore him.

Though I pray for my brother Basil, at the same time my heart breaks for the many that are being led astray and having their lives destroyed by what are clearly errant teachings, perversions of scripture, and meddling in many families.

I have found out that within CTMI people often leave and it is as if they ceased to exist. If questioned about them leaders will brand them as having "twisted hearts", being backslidden, or simply avoid the issues.

I would like to tell the whole story but feel that this would be very ponderous and long as our relationship goes back almost 40 years, 31 of which we have shared serving the Lord. So I will start with the end and move to the beginning later.

This is the final chapter (so far) that our relationship came to.

Some time in late 2008 I received a call from a member of a large church in Hillcrest to let me know that their pastor had warned his congregation about Grace Gospel Church (GGC) as it was "cultic in nature at best and a cult at worst".

I subsequently met with the pastor and he told me that the pastoral fraternal in the Highway area had discussed a meeting held between Basil O'Connell-Jones and two elders of Hillcrest Baptist Church and were very concerned at statements made at this meeting. They were also concerned

with certain goings on within GGC and CTMI and had determined that the church was at best cultic in tendency and at worst a cult.

I also learned that many other churches had warned their people against GGC, one even posting a warning in their weekly newsletter.

On the 6th of February 2009 I met with Basil and Marc, an elder from Mauritius. In this meeting Basil said to me that he had come to repent to me if there was anything that he had done to offend me. I felt that this “repentance” was a very clinical and cold affair and that he was in fact washing his hands of me and clearing his conscience.

After the “repentance” I brought up the subject of all of the churches in our area openly warning their people against CTMI and GGC and suggested that he meet with these pastors. His response was basically that these pastors (he named some) were not to be trusted, legalistic, pharisaic and deceitful, that he had no respect for these men and he was not prepared to respond to this “persecution”. He underscored his stance by telling me that one of the Baptist elders, Keith Brown, who is the father of two young people in GGC, one of whom was suffering from a terminal brain tumour, had kicked his two boys out of home, had cut them off, would not support them financially and would have no contact with them. This statement in particular shocked me and I repeated it to my wife, Michele, on my return home.

In Late March I happened to go the Hillcrest Baptist Church and by chance met Keith Brown. I was so disturbed by what Basil had said that I questioned Keith about this and he was very shocked and denied the allegations emphatically. He practically wept at hearing this and was clearly very distraught and said that he was going to address the issue with his sons and then Basil. This prompted a series of emails between me and Basil and Keith and Basil. I have not edited them, but copied them in sequence below.

This is a copy of my correspondence to Basil and his responses in chronological sequence.

This one sent to Basil on 30th March

Hi Bas. Just tried to call you only to hear that you’re on a plane to Mauritius. So instead of telling you this I will have to write it down.

Through clients of mine, Stan and Tilly, I met coincidentally, a guy called Keith Brown, who I believe you know through Geoff and Stuart.

When we last spoke at the Mugg & Bean with Marc Labonte, you had told me that Geoff and Stuart’s father had cut them off and would not allow them to his home and would have nothing to do with them. I was naturally very shocked and even mentioned it to Michele saying that I couldn’t

believe that a father could do that to his dying son.

Anyway when I met with Keith I remembered what you had said and was very concerned that a father could do what you said he was doing to Stuart, so I questioned him about it. Well he was very shocked and deeply troubled and told me that the situation was in fact the exact opposite and that he was going to take it up with Geoff and Stuart, and based on what they told him he would then contact you with this.

So I am just giving you a heads up to expect contact from Keith in this regard.

Obviously if what he tells me is correct, and he has not cut off his boys and you were misinformed by Stuart or somehow got the wrong information, then you will have to get to the bottom of this and try to explain this to Keith.

As mentioned last time we met, I am concerned about the status of the churches in the area that seem to have a notion that Grace is a cult and are openly declaring this to their people. I know that you expressed that you were not interested in meeting with any of these church leaders and trying to resolve this. I also know that my opinion in this, or any other matter, does not really hold any influence over you but I still feel that this should be addressed as it can only get nastier.

Anyway I just wanted to let you know what had gone on in the last two days and from what I understand that there is quite a groundswell of opposition that should be addressed.

Regards
Howard

This sent by Keith to Basil on the 31st March

Dear Basil

It has come to my attention that you have expressed the view that “Keith Brown, an elder in one of the churches persecuting us like the religious community persecuted Jesus, has turned his back on his dying son, cut him off from all support and kicked him out of his home, meaning that the Pages now have to take care of him and his wife.”

I mentioned to Stuart today that I have heard that the above view has been expressed in GGC and asked him to answer whether he agreed with this sentiment or not. His answer was “that is preposterous”.

I have shared this information with my fellow elders as this slanderous lie ultimately brings the precious name of Christ into disrepute in the Hillcrest community. I would appreciate a meeting

with you Basil where hopefully you will find it in your heart to explain and repent of this act.

In Christ

Keith Brown

This is Basil's response to Keith

From: Basil O' Connell-Jones

Sent: 31 March 2009 12:30

To: Keith: d-n-a Knowledge Network

Subject: Re: Slander

My dear Keith

It is as Stewart said preposterous for you or anyone else to believe such a lie as this "slanderous" is what you called it my dear brother, an apt word to use under these circumstances.

Honesty Keith, you know the heart of Phil and Lynn for you and your family? I am shocked that you would even begin to entertain such folly and nonsense as this, from whoever it comes from!!

Do you really and truly believe Keith that Phil, Lynn or my self would ever even imagine saying to anyone that you have kicked your dying son out your house? We are not pagans my friend lets not act nor think as they do. I never want to hear about this thing again, not from you nor anyone else, may that be abundantly clear.

I'm currently in Mauritius with the church here preaching this glorious gospel that has saved us and will one day bring us into His glorious presence hallelujah!!

I remain yours honestly and faithfully,

Basil

Now my second letter to Basil on 2nd April due to his non response to my first letter

Hi Bas. I trust that you are enjoying your trip to Mauritius.

I hope that you received my email of Monday, but haven't received any reply. Except to say that apparently Keith Brown did contact you and has received an answer as he did contact me and gave me the gist of your response to him in which you told him that I had lied regarding this issue.

Bas, I'm certain that you recall what you said to me, and if you have forgotten, please ask Marc to recall. I have no doubt whatsoever that you told me that Keith had cut his dying son off, would not

have any contact with and had kicked him out. I am a little surprised that you have told him that. Please let me know your thoughts on this broer.

Love
Howard

This is Basil's response to me on 2nd April

MY DEAR HOWARD,

I'M SO SHOCKED ,THAT U COULD EVAN BEGIN 2 IMAGINE THAT I'D EVER SAY SUCH A THING !!
THIS FAMILY I KNOW WELL HOWARD AND LOVE DEEPLY, KEITH WOULD NEVER EVER DO SUCH A
THING AS THAT 2 ANY OF HIS SONS NEVER MIND STUART IN HIS CONDITION.

MARC AND I BOTH R DEEPLY DISTURBED AND GRIEVED AT THIS TYPE OF ACCUSATION, HONESTLY
HOWARD I HAVE NO IDEA WHY U R ACTING LIKE THIS ?

MAY THE LORD HELP U MY BROTHER, MY HEART IS SAD AND BROKEN 4 U HOWARD.

BASIL

I was totally shocked at this response. I could not believe that Basil actually denied the conversation and so after a few days I sent this on the 6th of April

Hi Bas,

Wow, what can I say? I don't know how to respond to your mail.

Firstly I can't think how you can so emphatically state that I imagined that you said that. I can understand Marc not grasping what you said due to his limited comprehension of English, but surely he would have at least heard you talking about this? I'm also amazed that you are so clearly denying this and did not even seem aware that you did discuss the relationship between Keith and his sons.

Then I am also very surprised at your tone in the letter. Your absolute denial of this conversation and indication that I am deliberately lying, deluded, or simply being mischievous does astound me, to say the least. I would have expected you to say something like, "Yes I recall speaking about Keith regarding his relationship with his sons but the gist of what I was saying was...." Or " my recollection of the conversation was" I can only assume that you honestly believe that you did not speak about this at all.

Then of course the fact that you have disseminated this standpoint to at least some people in the church does distress me. That I have been labelled as backslidden, left the church and people think that I am either lying or deluded does concern me. Many of these people are friends, brothers and sisters and clients of mine.

Basil, between you and me we know that what you said to me when we were talking about the meeting you had with the pastor of the Hillcrest Baptist church was to the effect that one of the elders there was the sort of person who had cut off his sons for being in the church, one of whom was dying, had kicked them out of his home and would have no contact with them. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that that is what you said. I was so taken aback by that statement, that a father could treat his sons, and a dying one at that, like that, that I repeated it word for word to Michele immediately after I got home.

I still feel strongly that the issues that I addressed at our last meeting really should be dealt with, but also realise that due to my estrangement from any form of counsel and leadership in Grace and CTMI that I have no platform to voice my concerns so can only say that I think you really should reconsider your intransigence in these matters.

Whatever your reasons are for denying what was said, you owe it to Keith and to me to recap very carefully and come up with an explanation. Suffice to say that you have been one of my oldest and dearest friends and I want you to know that as you're my brother in the Lord, I forgive you and pray that you will deal with these issues in a responsible and prayerful manner.

Regards

Howard

This was then Basil's response to me on 8th April

MY DEAR HOWARD,

LET ME MAKE THINGS VERY CLEAR 2 U MY FRIEND BOTH MARC AND I ARE VERY CLEAR ABOUT THE TIME WE HAD WITH U VERY CLEAR !!

U WILL REMEMBER MY SOLE PURPOSE 4 HAVING COFFEE WITH U, WITH MARC THERE, WHO HOWIE DOSE HAVE AN AMAZING GRASP OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND DEFIANTLY KNOWS THE SPIRIT OF OUR TIME 2 GETHER WHICH WAS 2 TRY AND AND RESTORE YR HEART ONCE AGAIN 2 THE LORD AND US.

I'M NOT DISREGARDING THE FACT THAT WE SPOKE OF MANY THINGS HOWIE WHAT I NEVER SAID AND WOULD NEVER SAY, AS IT IS NOT IN MY HEART NOR HAVE I EVER HAS BEEN NOT 4 ONE SECOND HAVE I BELIEVED THAT KEITH WOULD HAVE KICKED OUT HIS DYING SON !!! THIS HOWARD IS A LIE FROM HELL AND I CAN ONLY THINK COMES FROM YR OWN TWISTED HEART. MAY THE LORD GRANT REPENTANCE HOWIE !!

MY HEART 4 U WILL ALWAYS REMAIN OPEN AND IN FAITH 4 REPENTANCE 2 COME 2 U IT'S SO SAD MAN 4 U 2 TURN LIKE THIS , IT HAS BROKEN MY HEART.

NOW AS I HAVE SAID 2 KEITH AND NOW 2 U HOWARD I NEVER WANT 2 HEAR ABOUT THIS NONSENSE NOR THESE LIES AGAIN !!

LORD HAVE MERCY

I WILL REMAIN YOURS TRULY

BAS

Michele, my wife was very shocked at the tone of the letters from Basil and after a few days decided to send him this on the 11th

Basil,

The last two mails that you sent Howard have left me gobsmacked and I feel I must respond to this blatant display of self-defence, pride and self-righteousness. I cannot believe your attempt to cover-up what I am absolutely certain is the truth and accuse Howard of lying and then have the audacity to chastise him so angrily, almost as a father reprimanding a child "LET ME MAKE THINGS VERY CLEAR TO YOU MY FRIEND .. VERY CLEARI NEVER WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THIS NONSENSE NOR THESE LIES AGAIN."

Who do you think you are Basil? Where is the love? Where is the grace? How can you think you have the right to judge people and then demand that they repent to you with such blatant anger?

I am a witness to the fact that you discussed the situation about Keith because I questioned Howard as soon as he got home and I was equally shocked to hear about the alleged behaviour of Stu's father toward his son. Besides that Howard had no previous knowledge of Keith, who he was, what church he went to, that he was in that meeting that you had with the Baptist pastor, that Stu was staying with the Pages or that he was even in the country for that matter, before his meeting with you and Marc.

Is it possible that the frequent outbursts of irrational anger that you suffer from leave you with no recollection of events; this of course does not excuse the obvious manipulation of people around you to your way of thinking with a distorted view of the truth?

Your accusations and your aim to discredit and slander Howard (like convincing people that he has a “twisted heart”) over the last couple of years are irreparable, serious and destructive. In addition the rage with which you have lashed out at Howard on several occasions and even toward Trynity make it apparent that you suffer from delusions of grandeur and enjoy manipulating, controlling and belittling people, Howard in particular.

It is a very sad thing that you have allowed your confrontational attitude to destroy the love and friendships that we have shared over the last 30 years and especially with Howard who has been your closest and most loyal friend.

I know that I must forgive you Basil and do. Don’t feel that you must reply to this mail as I am really not interested in reading anymore of your hostile denials!

Michele

For the last three years I have had confrontation after confrontation with Basil. I have repeatedly been told that my heart was “twisted”, I was spiritually immature, I was carnal, I had no grasp of the gospel, and many other quite belittling things.

Elder after elder, old and very respected friends, have come to me and listened to my story of estrangement and violent verbal abuse and each one, to a man, has told me that I must let God deal with Basil, but I must repent to him for harbouring wrong feelings towards him.

Both Michele and I wrote to Miki after the second or third outburst from Basil to me and implored for his intervention. Neither of us received a reply.

So for three years I have been an outcast. Wondering what I had done, my self esteem shattered, my faith in ruins. Michele stopped attending GGC a year before this incident as she couldn’t stand to come and hear the angry messages about people with twisted hearts needing to repent etc etc, knowing that I was the target of these messages.

Well that was the end of a chapter in our lives, and as a result I have now met, through Keith, a number of other parents and hurting families and individuals who have felt the brunt of the “gospel” of CTMI. My heart has broken for these parents, brothers and sisters and friends of the young lives that CTMI is targeting and plucking for their own ends without any thought given to the heartache of the families who are shattered by what is happening.

And so I have decided to try to help these families and also to prevent other families from having to endure the pain of separation from their children.