

**12 February 2010**

Dear Selby

In the few times we have met I have always sensed you to be a warm, sincere and gentle brother in Christ. It therefore saddens me all the more that I am constrained to write to you in the current circumstances.

Howard Silk has told me that on two occasions you have expressed a significantly different view of the meeting Clint Archer and myself held with Basil, yourself and Neville on 5 August 2008. **Namely that we have overreacted and that Basil apologised and repented and that the meeting ended with love and unity.**

Since this meeting was a watershed in our relationship with CTMI and understanding of their teaching, style and approach, and since you were there, I feel it is necessary to challenge you on this and attempt to reach a common understanding.

May I first share the content of the meeting as we recorded it and then comment on your interpretation. (Please tell us if we missed anything substantive)

Rachel Gillon had left Hillcrest Baptist Church overnight leaving us with a problem with her roles as a Sunday school teacher and youth leader. She also began aggressive recruiting among our youth and the youth of other churches. (We had calls from their pastors!) Our youth approached the elders and asked that the matter be dealt with. All attempts to have her leave more reasonably failed. She ignored our and life time friends' appeals, cried "persecution" and said "you are no longer my elders – I will only listen to Basil". At an elders' retreat I suggested to my brothers that since I knew Basil as a reasonable man we should approach him on the matter. This was agreed and we sent the following e-mail to Basil.

*"Hi Basil*

*Thanks for agreeing to see us tomorrow.*

*Basil, it is our hope and heartfelt desire that we are labouring together for the Kingdom of Christ in this community. Our joint Christian witness must express the heart and will of God. A situation has arisen around Rachel Gillon and we as leaders need to agree the way forward with Godly wisdom.*

*Rachel Gillon attended a camp with CTMI in Mauritius last year. She was told "It is our goal to get you and your family to join us". (I expressed some concern at this to Geoff at the time and decided to leave it, knowing the zeal of the family concerned!) She responded by saying God was also working in Hillcrest Baptist Church.*

*She had come under conviction under Clint's ministry at youth and broken off with her non Christian boyfriend. Her subsequent growth and commitment has been a joy to all of us. She teaches at one of our church plants, helps with youth leadership and teaches in our Sunday school. She still lives at home while studying and is dependent upon her parents.*

*She recently phoned me to ask if she can hand over her Sunday school class. When I asked for reasons she said she was moving to "Bas's Church". I naturally asked why and whether she had taken counsel from her parents or anyone else? She simply said she had attended a service with you and now had no choice but to move and that she had no problems with us. She had not spoken with her parents or anyone in leadership. I counselled her to do so and also to come and see me for further discussion.*

*She has now had discussion with her parents, myself and Barbara, as well as Clint and her close friends. We all rejoice in her desire to serve and please Jesus wherever God leads her. We also all*

have expressed concern at a decision taken without counsel from her elders or parents and of “deserting” areas of service at short notice. After sharing appropriate scriptures about honouring parents and her elders we suggested a process of discussion and engagement with you that could lead to her leaving at year end. This would enable us to manage the transition more effectively and find suitable alternative folks for the roles in which she serves in our flock.

She has refused this “wisdom in the counsel of many” and now has also begun accusations which disturb us deeply. The most concerning is that we preach a different gospel and are not a “mature” church in terms of Ephesians 4.

Baz, we would really appreciate hearing your thoughts on the following tomorrow:

1. Do you and your members accuse Hillcrest Baptist Church of preaching a false/incomplete gospel? If so on what do you base this claim?
2. Are you in agreement with Rachel breaking fellowship with us in the way she has? How would you handle a similar situation in your fellowship?
3. Paul exhorts us to “make every effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Eph 4:3) Are you prepared to support us as we work with this dear young believer at a solution that has more grace and is less damaging than is currently the case. (Her parents are deeply hurt, example of unfaithfulness to other members, many baffled at the accusations, image of CTMI as preying on young believers and filling them with unfounded, unwise accusations etc).

In His grace

And here is the **transcript of the meeting**:

We may have missed some detail but we are sure before God that nothing significant has been left out.

- Bas in response to mail - This is all a lot of baloney and absolute rubbish. We do not have a problem with HBC but Jesus sets us free indeed and Rachel must be free to follow her heart. She is a wonderful person with a heart for God who was challenged among us. We then met at the Pages for lunch and by the end of the day she decided she had to join us. And now you guys are standing in the way.
- Keith – This has happened very quickly , surely...
- Bas- I have two pathetic Pharisees sitting in front of me who want to tie people in chains and put them in prisons of law
- Clint – Wow! How do you come to that conclusion?
- Basil – I can feel it
- Keith - Basil I am amazed at your response – upon what do you base these radical accusations – you don’t even know us? We are not standing in Rachel’s way – just looking at the whole picture and wanting to be wise in the best interests of all concerned.
- Basil – ignoring the question but saying “Keith I am direct – I tell it how it is. Duncan has attended with us and has no problem with our doctrine and we have no problem with HBC – folks like your boys and the Pages have just moved on. “
- Clint. Does freedom in Christ mean freedom to ignore God’s word about honouring parents and elders and responsibilities to her Sunday School class? (Clint read passages from new testament) To be practical, who will run her class next week? This is a real issue in God’s Kingdom in which we both are working. Can you not help us? (Selby seemed to nod with understanding?)
- Basil – with high emotion - Don’t quote scriptures at me, that’s a dead letter and putting law. The law kills. You people just go around applying scriptures to people’s lives.
- Clint: Smiling - yes that’s my calling! Jesus said “Sanctify them with the truth – your word is truth” I am not mentioning ceremonial law from the OT – I agree that’s dead – I have just read from Paul in the new testament – that’s something we cannot ignore

- *Basil – Ignoring Clint’s point - Rachel is an adult let her follow her heart.*
- *Keith - But Basil what about her parents’ thoughts? She is living at home, still studying and is entirely dependent upon them?*
- *Basil – with irritation – then she can come and stay here or with one of us – Lynn Page is her mother.*
- *Keith – with firmness – No! Wendy is her mother and she is very grieved in all of this!*
- *Basil – (quoting Scripture after rebuking us for doing so) Jesus himself said I have not come to bring peace but a sword – between parent and child.. If Duncan has a problem he must come and see me.*
- *Clint very calmly opening to that passage and pointing out that the context is clearly about persecution of Christians by a pagan society. Says – “The Gospel never divides believers. In fact Jesus prayed for unity and Paul condemned factions”*
- *Basil – dismissively waving – that’s your interpretation and proceeded to base his interpretation on Kathy (whom he said is a believer) leaving because he stood for the gospel and now he has the sword of pain and emotion in his heart .*
- *Keith – So it seems then you have no concern for Rachel’s parents and the request from the church where she grew up and that you are OK with Rachel breaking fellowship with us immediately. You would be OK if a prominent person in your church leaves overnight without any questions?*
- *Bas – yes of course*
- *Neville – Yes Basil let me go to Mauritius and then I came back and here I am. You guys need to leave sitting on your positions and put the book aside (while shifting Clint’s bible to one side) and let God speak to your heart.*
- *Clint – I can never put aside God’s precious word! That’s where God speaks to my heart.*
- *Keith – What? Put aside what so many in history have shed blood to preserve??!!*
- *Bas – Are you saying the bible is not important to me – I have been studying it for 30 years. Are you accusing me of not reading the bible? Are you saying I don’t love the bible?*
- *Keith – Of course not Bas – you are the guys saying its dead and we should put it aside....*
- *Bas – You guys come here with your flowery language ... you must realize that people move on. The Pages moved on – they appreciated the financial help from HBC people and all that, but they moved on*
- *Keith - They moved to Kloof Baptist when we had a pastor the church eventually asked to leave..*
- *Bas - Why are you guys scared of losing people – is it because we have something you haven’t got?*
- *Keith – That sounds arrogant to me*
- *Bas - Keith you can see how well your boys are doing. And now that Rachel also wants to move on you guys discipline the poor girl – for following her heart – for wanting to serve Christ!*
- *Keith - That’s definitely not true. Where does that come from? Each case is discussed in detail by whole eldership and I promise you no such decision has even been discussed.*
- *Bas – How can you guys find fault with her or anyone when you have planks in your own eyes? (Quoting again) – Jesus said take the plank out your eye before finding specs in others!*
- *Clint – We have already said we are not standing in Rachel’s way. We have amicably agreed a number of people who have moved and we facilitated this by discussion with other church leaders like we are trying to do now - its just the manner and speed.*
- *Keith - What might it be that we haven’t got Bas? We are being accused of preaching a different gospel.*
- *Bas - Apostolic anointing and revelation*
- *Clint – thank you for your time – we want to learn in this situation and its best we go away and pray about it. We are on the same side as you - we are also concerned about*

*unholiness in the church at large and preach the same gospel as Paul, Luther, Calvin, Whitefield and Edwards..*

- *Neville – Now there's a teachable spirit – God can work with that*
- *Basil – I'm sorry guys forgive me I don't do this leader to leader thing very well and am going to beat myself up over this all the way to Zim.*
- *Us – (being unsure what he is apologising for?) Don't worry Bas – we all need grace*
- *Bas – Come for a hug and call me when I'm back from Zim*

In terms of your interpretation we agree as indicated in the text that Basil made an unspecific apology in what seemed an unfortunately manipulative way. (“Now I am going to beat myself up over this all the way to Zim!”) We agree that in spite of the rude and unChristlike treatment meted out to fellow church leaders in the community we nevertheless embraced Basil in the spirit of peace in which we wrote to Basil and came to the meeting.

We cannot agree that he repented. Repentance means a 180 degree about turn – a complete change to do the opposite of what was done before.

- Our appeal regarding Rachel was completely ignored
- Rachel left home to live with the Pages very shortly afterwards – just as Basil suggested
- Almost the exact same sentiments and attitude were evident from the Pages in a meeting with Clint Archer and the Gillons.
- In a meeting with Howard not long afterwards where Howard was expressing concern about what churches in the community were saying about cultish behaviour in GGC, Basil again spoke in belligerent and disparaging terms about us and other pastors in the area.
- CPG parents also report sudden changes from charm to anger/aggression in the meetings they had with Basil. These were all subsequent to our meeting and Basil's “repentance”.
- Basil's belligerence and contentiousness was evident for the whole community to see at Stuart's memorial service. You should have heard the comments we received bro. And mainly from committed Christians! It was also very evident to journalists Victoria, Jason and Sharleen when interacting with him.
- The “sword in families teaching” vs “honouring parents” has continued to be experienced by all CPG parents and many others who have contacted us.
- The “we have what others don't have/ us vs them” teaching and attitude is all over CTMI documents, blogs, articles etc and has been extensively quoted and commented upon on our forum.
- The “put the book aside and let God speak to your heart” sentiment was expressed on Carte Blanche by Miki Hardy when he said he is waiting for a word from God (peace in his heart) before he speaks with us. This when God in His word has already commanded him to meet with us. (Matthew 5:23-24). He no doubt considers that a dead letter and has put the book aside.

In other words this meeting encapsulated all the concerns we have subsequently come to clearly understand.

(Exclusive gospel, disrespect towards parents and other churches, low view of family, low view of scripture, emotional manipulation, aggressive recruiting in other churches as well as the fawning submission evidenced in Neville's comments, your silence in the meeting and recent comments about the meeting and the Pages mouthing the same words a week or two later)

**So Selby in the light of the above we would really appreciate knowing for what do you think Basil was apologising? What did he repent from and where is the evidence?**

To us it seems that this “throw away apology” was much like Basil’s comments to a reliable source about Stuart’s funeral. When questioned about the way he handled it, Basil and Neil spoke of Miki rebuking Basil and apparently Basil “wept before the brothers in Mauritius”. Yet this was never expressed to the Brown family and the community at large or his congregation who seemed to glory in his approach and told him they were proud of him for being faithful to the gospel and that the people who walked out were offended by the truth!!! (We agree that the true gospel does offend people. However, firstly, nothing of the true gospel – what Jesus came to do to save us - was preached. Secondly, all those who gave feedback were offended by Basil’s aggressive and self promoting manner. To quote what Miki evidently said - “You did not win us any friends there”)

Furthermore, Selby, we have reliable feedback that at the very next funeral he conducted, offended people walked out again – only this time Basil shouted at them as they were leaving.

So hopefully you will understand that the apology and repentance expressed in our August '08 meeting and before Miki and the brothers in Mauritius seems utterly empty and meaningless. In the light of what followed, all the evidence points to it being just words – perhaps uttered in the hope of a quick smoothing over the cracks but with no intention of fundamental change.

**Rather, the behaviour of Rachel then and subsequently, plus Basil’s response in that meeting was the beginning of the opening of our eyes to what CTMI is about.** Stuart and Lou’s subsequent departure from my home with no communication whatsoever was further reinforcement. Then the refusal to even acknowledge my request to care for my son again towards the end of his life. Then the handling of the funeral and then all the almost identical experiences of the other parents and previous members we have encountered, has simply entrenched over and over again the attitude and views we experienced in that meeting.

I have real difficulty understanding how you are able to “laugh it off” as “nothing”, that we are making a “mountain out of a mole hill” and that there was a good vibe and love and unity there. Clint took our experience with Rachel and the content of this meeting to the pastors fraternal and it was from there that pastors spoke of their experiences with GGC and the message of “cultishness” spread. (By the way - Clint initially disagreed with this allegation!!) This reached Howie via a client who told him of an announcement in the client’s church. Howard took this back to Basil whose response triggered Howie’s leaving GGC. These announcements in local churches also reached other parents who were increasingly worried about their children’s distance from them and led to the formation of the CPG. So, in the providence of God, that meeting was hugely significant my brother.

It has been our experience that CTMI people do not engage in robust debate. Perhaps they are used to unquestioning obedience to leaders and are fearful, having seen what happens to those who do not toe the line or dare to ask questions. We often hear “discussion is fruitless – the Lord will bring things to the light”. I truly hope to hear from you and that we will be able to discuss these things as brothers in Christ in a spirit of openness, love and desire for unity.

Blessing and much love in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Brown', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Keith Brown