

Pastor Carlos De Jesus Miranda, founder of Hialeah church Palabra de Fe, outlines below his theological objections to his controversial brother's Creciendo en Gracia ministry

CONTRADICTIONS OF THE DOCTRINE PROCLAIMED BY THE MINISTRY 'GROWING IN GRACE'

NOTE: When clarifying for the reader the contradictions of the Growing in Grace ministry, I do so in terms of the observance of biblical interpretation, not in terms of the personal criticism of the people who compose the Growing in Grace ministry. What's personal is personal; what's biblical is biblical. The people of Growing in Grace may be wonderful people, as my brother Jose Luis is. This does not mean that they interpret the Bible correctly.

A person can be a Catholic, Pentecostal, Baptist or a Jehovah's Witness and be a good person, but not necessarily a good representative of Christ. A good person is not necessarily a good Christian and is not necessarily right in his interpretation of the Bible. To be good, a good person, charming, charismatic, religious and a doer of good things does not represent the truth of Christ. Only our faith in His Word and in the person of Jesus will lead us to the truth. Today, I judge the doctrine of Growing in Grace, not the persons [in it] or my brother, Jose Luis De Jesus Miranda.

Contradiction is the word that best describes the biblical interpretation proclaimed by the Growing in Grace ministry. The contradictions begin with its name. Growing in Grace is a term coined by the apostle Peter, whom they call "iniquitous." How is it possible to bestow such high honor on "the iniquitous Peter" by using his writings for the name of the organization? Iniquitous is a term used by the apostle Paul in II Thessalonians 2:8 to describe the Antichrist. If Peter is the iniquitous man presented by Paul, who gave orders to kill Paul, as they affirm, why bestow on him the high honor of utilizing his writings to identify the name of their ministry? Peter coined, in his Second Epistle, Chapter 3:18, the term "grow in grace." It is an alarming contradiction that is reflected throughout the theological infrastructure of Growing in Grace.

The second contradiction consists in the fact that they proclaim that the writings of the apostle John, like all the other books in the Bible, are

apochryphal (of obscure authenticity). However, their leader says he is the Antichrist identified by John in his book of Apocalypse. If only Paul experienced the revelation, why don't they utilize only the writings of Paul? The only thing they prove is the opposite, John wrote on behalf of God. John described the Antichrist that their leader claims to be, and the number 666 that they now use to identify their faithful. Of course, Jose Luis cannot be the Antichrist, because he does not meet the biblical requirements. The Antichrist has to be a Roman, as affirmed by the prophecy of Daniel in Chapter 9:26-27. As we know, Jose Luis is Puerto Rican, not a Roman prince.

The third contradiction appears in his statements that there is no hell, there is no condemnation or sin. If there is no condemnation or sin or hell ... why do they preach that those who don't side with them will be lost? Lost from what? If there is no hell, no Devil, no heaven, no sin, where will I go when I am lost? Why not leave the whole world in peace if, after all, they have nothing to offer to those who are "lost" to sin, hell or heaven? Why pester the Catholics or the Pentecostals into a futile conversion? If it is true that there is no hell, then leave them alone because they won't be lost. Why make statements -- like a labor union would -- to achieve nothing? According to them, the people who will be saved are saved. Why pester other beliefs if they will be neither saved nor lost? The reason we preach is to save someone who is lost. But if the lost are not chosen and will not be saved, and if the saved ones -- although not saved -- will be saved ... what is the faith they are preaching? None; it's all a contradiction.

The fourth contradiction consists in their leader's assertion that he is the incarnation of Jesus Christ. His words, verbatim, were: "Jesus Christ got inside me." That experience he claims he had is the only thing my beloved brother Jose Luis utilizes to validate his new name and personality as Jesus. In the past, he claimed to be an angel incarnate. What were those claims based on? His mind and his ideas were his Bible, not the apostolic writings that we know as the Bible. Later, he claimed publicly that he was St. Paul incarnate. He assumed for himself the words by Paul in I Corinthians, Chapter 3:10 and proclaimed he was the only man authorized as the personal successor of St. Paul. (In other words, perhaps he wanted to become the Evangelical Pope. Just like Catholics have their Pope and the Greeks have their Patriarch, Jose Luis wanted to become the Evangelical Pope. I don't

know why he criticizes the Catholic Pope so much, when he desires to be just like him. That is why his followers call him "Pope.")

Anyone can say he is Jesus Christ; we have seen so in the past. Recently, a South Korean man murdered 31 students at Virginia Tech Institute. On its front page, The Miami Herald quoted Cho Seung-Hui as saying "I died like Christ" (see issue of 4/19/07). But what proof must be given by someone who claims to be Jesus? Let us look at several examples:

- 1. Be born in Bethelhem of Judea (Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:5-6). Not in Puerto Rico.
- 2. Be the Only Begotten Son of God. Only Begotten means unique, there is no other. (John 1:14, 3:16; I John 4:9) There cannot be both a resuscitated Jesus and a flesh-and-bones Jesus who never was resuscitated.
- 3. That unique Son became flesh only once (John 1:14). Once He was resuscitated, His "new body was of incorruptible flesh." (See I Corinthians, 15:42.) His resuscitated body looks like his flesh-made body, but it is now incorruptible. (See Luke 24:39.) Jesus affirms that he has flesh and bones. Flesh and bones cannot occupy other flesh and bones because that becomes re-incarnation, and the Bible condemns re-incarnation. Another truth is that if Jose Luis is Jesus and Jose Luis dies, as he must die, then Jesus dies again -- but He cannot die again. (Romans 6:9.)

The fifth contradiction is the claim that they represent the government of God upon Earth. This means that they are the axis of what God will do, based only on personal opinion, without a biblical basis, without a prophetic basis. A government without love, without grace (even though they call themselves Growing in Grace, I see not grace but criticism.) That government is absolutist, and rejects other believers. The Catholic Church called us its separated brothers, but at least it called us brothers. Growing in Grace leads pickets of love, not love and grace. Pickets that do not reflect the love of God and Christ.

What kind of government is it? The kingdom of the Messiah is a kingdom of peace. (See Isaiah 9:7.) Growing in Grace has publicly affirmed its wish to shut down all other churches. I have heard them say, "Do not go to church; better you should go to the beach." A serious government cannot

make statements contrary to the Bible, which encourages to attend the temple. (See Hebrews 10:25.)

Another irrefutable truth is that God has only one government. They affirm that they are the government of God on earth, as if God had another government in heaven. The government of God is the Kingdom of God, based on the justice and sanctity of God. Sanctity is the seal of God. (See II Timothy 2:19.)

In conclusion, I can affirm that the current ministry of Growing in Grace does not reflect the truths of the Gospel of Grace that it proclaimed at the start. There is no doubt that they are two different ministries. The current ministry has abandoned the truths it previously proclaimed, although not all of them were biblical truths. Growing in Grace has defected, little by little, from the truth of the Gospel. Although it always affirmed its principal theology of "once saved, always saved," at the start it upheld the other tenets of the Christian Church.

They used to believe in baptism by water, in the Lord's Supper, in the communion with other believers, in leading a life of sanctity, in living in grace, not by deeds. At first, the impact was felt and brought reforms into the Pentecostal movement, not to Christianity. In the past, the truth of the Gospel of Grace was something shared only by the Baptists, from where Jose Luis learned to know grace. Pentecostalism preached not grace but demands upon the flesh, mixed with legalism.

After the arrival of Growing in Grace, the Pentecostals embraced the grace, while at the same time Growing in Grace abandoned the healthy doctrine and turned to heresy. We can debate "once saved, always saved" -- which I personally believe was the wrong door that led to other errors -- but when comparing "once saved, always saved" with the errors they now proclaim, there is no doubt that the errors they now preach are worse and much more dangerous than "once saved, always saved."