

PLAIN SPEECH

Volume 2 – Issue 26 – 12 April 2009

“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

By Scott Parker

“THOSE SURE WERE HARSH WORDS”

I'm opposed to being offensive simply to be mean (cf. **Ecc.10:12**). Yet, real Christians ought to know that smooth and subtle words and true gospel preaching are mutually exclusive; i.e. they do not go together (cf. **2 Tim. 4:1-5**). However, so many are those who claim to be Christians who get awfully uncomfortable when a preacher begins to use unmistakably clear language.

For instance, not too long ago it was brought to my attention that some felt I was “harsh.” Why? For underscoring the fact there are many so-called sound congregations which are, in fact, no better off than what most commonly refer to as “liberal” groups. This is true in that said congregations are actually off-base concerning any number of issues.

I worry said types of individuals haven't grasped how “harsh” God's Word is at times. In fact, some passages are so “harsh” that, in comparison, honesty would compel those “raised in the church” to admit I'm more like Mr. Rogers than Mr. Meany. The remainder of this article will note just a few examples with some emphasis added by this author.

*“His watchmen are **blind**: they are all **ignorant**, they are all **dumb** dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are **greedy** dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that **cannot understand**: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter” (Isa. 56:10-11).*

*“And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim. **Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee.** Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; **Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched**” (Jer. 7:15-20).*

*“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O **generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also **the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire**” (Matt. 3:7-10)*

*“Give not that which is holy unto the **dogs**, neither cast ye your pearls before **swine**, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you” (Matt. 7:6).*

*“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, **Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men**” (Matt. 16:21-23).*

*“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** for **ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves**” (Matt. 23:15).*

*“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. **Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works**” (Rev. 2:20-24).*