

# PLAIN SPEECH

Volume 2 – Issue 3 – 2 November 2008

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

By Scott Parker

## ADOPTING A SCRIPTURAL APPROACH

Take a few seconds and read the following piece taken from <http://www.nytv.net>. It created a media-stir back in August. It should cause you to raise an eyebrow.

### Sunday School Teacher Dismissed Because She's A Woman

“A longtime Sunday School teacher told **7 News** Wednesday that she's heartbroken after being dismissed – apparently because she is a woman. Mary Lambert, who has taught Sunday School at Watertown's First Baptist Church for 54 years, said she received a letter from church leaders telling her she can no longer teach at the church. Lambert showed **7 News** the letter, which states that church leaders adopted a scriptural approach to Sunday school teachers. The letter quotes 1 Timothy 2:11-14 of the New Testament and states that the church's diaconate board unanimously decided to dismiss Lambert, who has taught a 9:30 a.m. Sunday school class for adults at the church for 11 years. ‘No one was more surprised than I was to get that letter,’ said Lambert. The letter was signed by church clerk Kendra LaBouf, who is married to Pastor Tim LaBouf. Lambert said she believes there's more to her dismissal than meets the eyes.”

Now is that amazing, or what; a Baptist Church has finally decided to adopt a scriptural approach?! It's about time they started turning to scripture for answers.

Make no mistake, I commend that group for instructing Lambert that she is out of line with God's will by teaching an adult class made of both men and women (I called a church member there in Watertown, New York to make sure it was a mixed group), for certainly she is. On this issue, God has made things crystal-clear: *“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence”* (1 Tim. 2:11-12).

However, I wonder why they have only adopted a “scriptural approach” in that one arena; i.e. headship of man (cf. 1 Cor. 11:3)? I wonder why they have not decided to adopt a “scriptural approach” to many of the other issues plaguing the Baptist Church? For instance:

- I wonder if that group is willing to adopt a “scriptural approach” regarding the very name they wear. After all, where can one read about The First Baptist Church in scripture? A “scriptural approach” would obviously demand a scriptural name (**Rom. 16:16, et al**).
- I wonder if that group is willing to adopt a “scriptural approach” regarding oversight of a local church. After all, where can one read about one-man pastoral oversight in scripture? A “scriptural approach” would demand a plurality of pastors overseeing each local congregation (**Acts 14:23; 20:17-32**).
- I wonder if that group is willing to adopt a “scriptural approach” regarding the title “church clerk.” After all, where can one read about such in scripture? A “scriptural approach” demands that one be satisfied with the Lord's arrangement for local churches (**Plp. 1:1-2**).
- I wonder if that group is willing to adopt a “scriptural approach” regarding the faulty Baptist notion commonly referred to as “Once Saved – Always Saved.” After all, one can certainly read that it is possible to sin willfully after one has received the knowledge of the truth and thus shall be devoured (**Heb. 10:25-27**). A “scriptural approach” would demand that they discard their erroneous doctrine of eternal security.
- I wonder if that group is willing to adopt a “scriptural approach” regarding how one's sins are washed away. Baptists teach that sins are removed prior to baptism; i.e. one is saved by faith through prayer. But is that what we read about in scripture? No. From the day of Pentecost onward we read one must submit to water baptism (immersion) to have his/her sins removed (**Acts 2:38; 22:16, et al**). A “scriptural approach” demands the “Sinner's Prayer” be abandoned.

As you well know, this line of thought could go on and on. I do wish, though I seriously doubt, that the “leadership” in every Baptist Church would begin to take a “scriptural approach” across the board. After all, souls are on the line (**Mk. 7:7-9**).

Also, wouldn't it be great if more “sound” congregations who wear the name church of Christ would begin to more readily adopt a scriptural approach? Things sure would change. But that's another article for another time.