

PLAIN SPEECH

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

By Scott Parker

“CAN YOU AND I GET TOGETHER FOR LUNCH?”

A fellow named Jim Stauffer – the preacher for the group Daniel used to worship with (the Lenexa church of Christ) – called me earlier today (7-20-09). He wanted to eat lunch with me. What exactly his agenda was remains unclear, but rest assured it was not to satiate carnal hunger. I've seen too many ambushes occur at restaurant tables to know better (**Prv. 14:15-16; 23:6-7**). I told him I was not in fellowship with him and was thus not interested in meeting with him. I then explained, in a very brief manner, why exactly I would not be dining with him. Two of those reasons (along with another I did not give him) are listed below.

Reason #1 – The congregation this man labors with meets on Sunday morning and again on Sunday night for worship. Daniel, on more than one occasion, humbly tried to get Mr. Stauffer to see the error of having a make-up offering of the Lord's Supper for those who missed the earlier assembly. Jim offered human arguments to justify the practice, but never did give scripture that authorizes a local church to offer a left-over Lord's Supper. The very common position he adheres to has brought division to the body of Christ. Mr. Stauffer has been unsuccessfully admonished to come to the narrow way (**Mt. 7:14**) relative to the second offering issue. How can I, knowing this, sit down and have a social meal with such a one (**cf. Titus 3:10**)? Now perhaps I have missed something all these years, and a left-over/make-up Lord's Supper is authorized. All Mr. Stauffer has to do is call me with a command, an approved example, or an inescapable conclusion that proves such. I will tape the call. I do not want to hear human arguments. I will not go into that arena with him or anyone else. What I want is scripture. So, Mr. Stauffer's willingness to allow the Lord's Supper to be perverted is one reason I would not dine with him today – and I told him as much.

Reason #2 – The congregation Mr. Stauffer is associated with had a gospel meeting in May (obviously with his approval) wherein an individual filled the pulpit who sees nothing wrong with the unscriptural human institution known as Florida College. How do I know his stand? It's easy. The preacher, L.A. Stauffer, has spoken several times at their annual unscriptural lectureship. His most recent appearance was in 2008. Why would I ever want to go to lunch with someone who has no problem with Florida College? Rather than grab a burger with a Florida College fan, I decided I would be much safer by obeying **Rom. 16:17-18**. That text reads: “*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*” Rather than sit and eat with an enemy of the Lord (**cf. Plp. 3:18-19**), I decided I would obey passages like **Eph. 5:11**, and **2 Jn. 9-11**. They read: “*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*” “*Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*” Now just in case I'm wrong and Mr. Stauffer has concluded that since God does not extend fellowship to those associated with the unscriptural human institution known as Florida College (**1 Jn. 1:6-7**), he does not either, then let him contact me. Again, I will record the call, and I will need to see fruit (**Mt. 7:20**). Let him produce the audio file in which he rebuked the gospel meeting speaker for his error relative to Florida College. Let me learn of a stand for the truth on this issue like the ones we read about in **Gal. 2:4-5, 11-14**. Let me learn of a rebuke he has sent to the school claiming their mission is unscriptural. However, I will not talk with him – let alone eat lunch with him – otherwise. The only thing he and I have to discuss is his repentance. So, Mr. Stauffer's acceptance of Florida College is another reason I would not dine with him today – and I told him so.

Reason #3 – Mr. Stauffer is inconsistent. He is a double minded individual (**cf. Js. 4:8**). Now I imagine he'd never admit such, but it's true. Keep reading. I'm certain that Mr. Stauffer – just like others like him – teaches properly how to ascertain Bible authority. I am certain he teaches the folks about commands, approved examples, and inescapable conclusions taken from the Word of God rightly divided (**2 Tim. 2:15**). Yet, I know that Mr. Stauffer is not consistent in application of Bible authority. For example, suppose someone asked Mr. Stauffer: “*Why does the congregation there in Lenexa not use mechanical instruments of music while worshipping God?*” How would he answer? If he is worth his salt, he would say, “*It is not authorized,*” and he'd be right! There is not a N.T. command for such. There is no approved example of such in the New Testament. There is not even a logical, necessary conclusion that can be reached which demonstrates the first century church (whether universally or locally) used mechanical instruments of music in the worship of God. However, Mr. Stauffer turns right around, without biblical authority, and supports a horrible abuse of the Lord's Supper, and also tips his hat to an unscriptural school. Real consistent! Why would I ever want to dine with someone like this? All it would do is get me rent (**Mt. 7:6**). Listen, I realize Mr. Stauffer preaches a lot of truth, but that's not enough for me to dine with a so-called brother (**Ax. 20:27; Js. 2:10**).

I would love to dine with Jim Stauffer – after he leaves off from the traditions of men (**Mk. 7:7-9**).