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Its Time to Stand -Part 1

An Audio Sermon concerning recent developments in the FGBC 2006

Pastor Steve Mitchell Garden City Grace Brethren Church, Roanoke, VA

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. My name is Steve Mitchell and I'm the pastor of Garden City GBC in Roanoke, VA and I have an urgent message for any who would kindly listen to this CD or read the accompanying article on my website www.powertostand.org

Please understand that this should be viewed as a voice of concern about what have become some very hot topics in our fellowship lately. I wish to say on the outset here that I mean absolutely no disrespect or malice towards anyone in any shape or form. This is not and must not be construed in any way as a personal attack on any pastor or ministry, even though some specific teachings and events will be addressed and identified. I judge no one's motives or eternal destinies but Scripture commands us to test all things.

Paul told the Thessalonians in his first epistle to them, 5:21-22: "Test all things; hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil."

He counseled the Corinthians that "he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged by no man." (1 Cor. 2:15).

Later, in 1 Cor. 6:5, he says: "I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide, diakrino, render a decision, between his brethren?"

Heb. 5:14 says: "But solid food belongs to those who are full grown, that is, those who by reason of use have exercised to discern both good and evil."

1 John 4:1 "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

Jesus tells us "Judge with righteous judgment." (John 7:24).

These and many other passages show us that we are indeed commanded to judge and discern teachings, and attitudes, spirits, messages and doctrines that are introduced into the Body of Christ. Eternal destinies and heart motives of individuals are off limits to us but we must exercise our discernment in these other areas. Its vital and crucial and commanded.

None are above that and we must make sound discerning judgments concerning the teachings and practices that come into our fellowship or are introduced to others. As always, I encourage anyone who is interested to contact me anytime at powertostand@yahoo.com or visit our website. Please receive this introductory word as charitable and with no malice.

The Bible says that in the last days, perilous, tense times will come (2 Tim. 3:1ff). False prophets and apostles will arise and deceive many (Matt 24:4-26). False gospels will be introduced and tolerated. The church will in many cases, heap up for themselves teachers that will tickle their ears (2 Tim. 4:3). There will be a great falling away from the faith in the days preceding the rapture of the church and the end things that God has planned (2 Thess. 2:3).

I believe wholeheartedly that we are in these days and sadly; the church of Laodicea is upon and among us (Rev.3:14-22). By that I mean that not every church is completely corrupted or apostatized but I think all of us see the effects of the lukewarmness, self deception and compromise that would infiltrate the Body of Christ in the last days.







Having identified the problem in generic descriptions and applied it to our day in varying extents. I wish to begin this address by citing some specific areas of false teaching and compromise that we in the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches (FGBC) seem to be heading into in some circles. Again not all of what I mention pertains to you or your church, nor is everyone in a Grace Brethren church involved with some of these teachings but I believe that we are seeing an increase in some of our fellowships being enamored with, Looking to, and in some cases, fully involved with what can only be described as unscriptural, dangerous and aberrant elements.

This address has in view primarily the recent involvements with high profile leaders in what is called the Church Growth Movement (CGM). Men like Bill Hybels (Willow Creek), Rick Warren (Saddleback and Purpose-Driven fame), Dan Southerland (Church Transitions), John Maxwell (INJOY), and others who represent this movement and some of its core teachings.

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 7/23/08 3:18 PM

Pastor Chuck O'Neal | [Beaverton, Oregon](#) |   

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Hello Ryan and other readers,

Please note that while I am accused of poor study skills, philosophical error and lousy rhetoric, the blog in question is not authored by me. This was clearly indicated multiple times in the opening lines of the blog (one might question one's interpretive skills). 😊 However, I am no doubt guilty by association in that I stand by the author, Pastor Steve Mitchell of Garden City Grace Brethren Church, Roanoke, VA. It should also be noted that young Bible College students with lots of academic theory and little experience in the trenches of Gospel warfare would benefit from their own advice; "humbly repent from your attacks and grow in conviction of truth." Furthermore, if you are going to argue that someone's rhetoric is poor, or that quotes have been mishandled, it is helpful to provide examples of those instances to substantiate your rhetoric. 😊

Love In Christ,

Chuck O'Neal, Pastor BGBC

 7/23/08 1:49 PM

SPotts | [Portland, Oregon](#) | 

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Ryan,

I respectfully submit that your reply is nothing more than an ad hominem attack on Pastor O'Neal. You have attacked by insulting the speaker and making accusations. If you have a personal knowledge of Pastor O'Neal that would substantiate your insinuation that he is ignorant of proper Biblical hermeneutics, philosophy, or rhetoric, then by all means bring that to light. Using ad hominem is not only fallacious reasoning, it is disappointingly unchristian behavior.

You have accused the pastor of abusing scripture, a serious charge indeed. However, you have not substantiated your claim to any degree. I'm certain that Pastor O'Neal would be most eager to reason with you from scripture, should you afford him that opportunity by being gracious enough to present specific concerns/scripture references.

You appeal to this pastor for humble-mindedness...please reconsider your own standing in this regard (Matt. 7:3-5).

"These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."

Respectfully,
SPotts

3/29/08 4:45 PM

Ryan Green | Portland, OR

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Bad news, dude, you are riding a hypocrite high.

You quoted multiple scriptures out of context in this article, not only that you poorly interpreted a variety of quotes - particularly those from Rick Warren.

I started reading because I saw in the introduction you pointed out several obvious heretics, with some guys I have respect for (Warren and McManus) and I wanted to hear your case. It was weak. I suggest you go to seminary, learn some Biblical interpretation and give it a whirl. Also, study a little philosophy and rhetoric so that you can actually understand that when someone says there is "truth in other religions" that means that there are some things true, certainly not the entire picture.

Please understand that this is not a personal attack or insult any greater than those you posted in your article.

Mr. O'neal, I live nearby perhaps we could go out to lunch and discuss your doctrine and work through these issues. It is my heart that you are not angry over this message, but that you humbly repent from your attacks and grow in conviction of truth, not adiophora.

May God's truth free your heart,
Ryan Green

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He who alone gives life to us gave up His life for us. ... Ralph Erskine

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