

# The Oologah Informer

## November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

### THE BRIDE AND PURITY

Toney L. Smith

Jesus Christ wants His church to be pure “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:25-27). 1 Timothy 5:2 speaks of the need to learn and practice purity; “The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.” Purity is defined as cleanliness, chastity or to be unmixed. The child of God must not be “mixed and mingled” with the ways of the world (1 John 2:15-17). Individuals known as Christians are joined to and are a part of the body or the church. These local congregations must strive to live clean, wholesome and pure lives (Ephesians 5:1-14). They must not be mixed with any action that would join them to the world. When we become members of the church, through obedience to the gospel, we are to put off the “old man” and put on “the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:22-24). Several things are then listed which are to be avoided by this new man (Ephesians 4:25-32). Galatians 5:19-21 also gives a listing of things that produce impurities and unfaithfulness. The child of God who “walks in darkness” brings reproach upon the church and specifically upon the congregation of which they are members. When repentance cannot be obtained from the unfaithful, the congregation must enact discipline in order to maintain the purity of Christ’s body (Ephesians 4:4; 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18, 24).

When God's people err from the truth and commit sin, as all of us do from time to time (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8, 10), they are required to repent and make the proper changes in their lives. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth warning them of an impurity that was being allowed, overlooked and tolerated there. Sin within that congregation needed to be recognized and ultimately removed. The apostle did not say, "Just leave it alone and it will go away." He did not say, “We must not get into other people’s business.” Instead, he told them in precise, clear and unmistakable terms to get rid of the impurity that would spoil the entire congregation (1 Corinthians 5:1-13). Notice carefully verse 6; "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" What does Paul mean? The passage states that if sin were allowed to remain in the church it would cause the whole church to become impure. If one sin is allowed and tolerated, then why would we not be obligated to tolerate the sins of all others? Would it be fair to allow some to live in sin and require others to maintain purity of life?

In many places, the church does not stand out as being different from the world. Some are accepting membership and fellowship of those coming from denominationalism. We often hear of congregations that are overlooking God’s law concerning divorce and remarriage. Pews are being filled with couples who are living in sinful and unscriptural marriages. As we have already noted, Paul

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#### Service Times

##### Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.  
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

##### Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

##### Preacher:

Russ Earl

##### AM Sermon:

Satan’s Plan to Wreck the World  
Part 1 –Changing Normal

##### PM Sermon:

Strange Things You Hear about the  
Church of Christ – Part 3 “The church  
of Christ oppresses women”

##### Sunday AM Bible Class:

Ecclesiastes – D. Jackson

##### Wednesday Bible Class:

Acts – V. Smith

##### **In SEARCH of the Lord’s Way**

On Channel 6-2 Sundays @ 7:30 am

##### **The Truth in Love** on Channel 47

Sundays @ 8am

##### Oologah Internet RadioPrograms

Vance’ Program on Wednesdays  
@ 6:15pm & Thursdays @ 6:15am

LIVE broadcast on Mondays @ 5pm

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commanded the church at Corinth to correct this situation (1 Corinthians 5). God's law concerning this was also made perfectly clear when John said to Herod "...it is not lawful for thee to have her" (Matthew 14:4). Jesus taught his disciples that which would constitute scriptural divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:3-9). When congregations violate God's marriage law they cause impurities to stain the Lord's church in that location.

We must remember that the church is the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2) and is to be treated with honor and respect. Ephesians 5 compares the husband wife relationship to that of Christ and the church (Vs. 25-31). We recognize that there is to be purity and faithfulness between the bride and the groom. Therefore, we must understand that Jesus requires His bride, the church to be pure as well. Purity is a mark of faithfulness whether in a marriage or in the church.

In Ephesians 5:21-33 Paul speaks of submission and uses the marriage as an illustration of what a pure and faithful relationship should be. However, in verse 32 we read, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." The bride is to be in subjection to her husband and the husband is to love his bride as "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." The church is the bride/wife of Christ; "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2). The one "husband" is Christ; the "chaste virgin" is the church. Christ has always been true and faithful to the church. The question is are we being true and faithful to Him?

The conclusion? The church must honor Christ and maintain purity by being faithful to Him in worship and work.