

## The Oologah Informer

March 24, 2013

### Address

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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.

### Evangelist:

Vance Smith

Russ Earl

### Announcements: Chris Nelson

\*Announcements and Prayer

Requests are on the screen and will

be announced before the AM

service.

### **Backsliding Is a Real Danger**

Toney L. Smith

Many in the world of “religion” feel that one cannot turn away from God after he has come to salvation. Backsliding is a word that is found in the Word of God. It is found some twelve times in the Old Testament. It is found nine times in Jeremiah alone.

“The Lord said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot” (Jeremiah 3:6). The word means “turning back or away.” Israel had made a covenant with God, therefore she was referred to as being the bride of Jehovah. But from the above verse we can clearly see that she had not been faithful.

The children of God today are in the same situation as was Israel of old. The church of Christ is described as being the bride of Christ (Ephesians 6:22-32). And, if we turn back we are then guilty of going back or backsliding. Anytime that we as Christians join with religious error, or ungodly living, we have gone back. We have become unfaithful to the bridegroom. Therefore, we should be cautious so that we do not find ourselves in this position. There are certain characteristics of the backslider which will help us be on guard.

(1) One of the first signs of backsliding will be manifested by IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE. This individual will come for a few services than he/she will miss one or two. When this attitude is present there is a lack of interest in spiritual matters. Christians should relish the idea of attending worship and find joy in being with others of like-mind. The Psalmist stated: “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord” (Psalm 122:1). The feeling of anticipation will help overcome irregular attendance.

(2) Also backsliding is evidenced when we do NOT HAVE A REAL SPIRIT OF LOVE FOR OUR BRETHREN. It is a sad occurrence when brethren do not want to be together and have no interest in one another. The Bible speaks volumes on this subject. Notice: “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:34-35). “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law” (Romans 13:8). When we fulfill this law we will have overcome to a great degree the “Backsliding mindset.”(3) When we find ourselves INDULGING IN SINFUL PRACTICES with little restraint we should know that we are drifting away from God (Isaiah 59:12). The children of Israel were often found in this condition. They had all blessings from God, but they were pulled into the world by unbelief. We must have the courage and set of mind to reject the pleasures of the world. The Hebrew writer spoke of Moses and his rejection of pleasure, “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Hebrews 11:25). We would do well to remember 1 John 2:15-17. The admonition is that we “love not the world (*continued on back*)

, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” The world will cause one to backslide. The child of God must take stock in his relationship with God. From time to time we are encouraged to “examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates” (2 Corinthians 13:5)?