

If Not Dale Carnegie, Maybe Ezekiel or Jesus?

Judging by the response, that Jan. 13 post wasn't inspired by Dale Carnegie's HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE! Or by an article like "How to build a big church of happy Christians." Maybe though, by Ezekiel, Jesus, Paul or John.

If you don't like the title, please know that I don't either but it's what came with it back in 1978-79 during my first pastorate. It's an affront to what we typically know as "the church," and it's personally insulting. I mean, what trade is considered lower than a prostitute – except maybe drug dealers on schoolyards?

Even back then, I saw Jesus' and the Apostles' call to discipleship to include our being transformed to become like Jesus in holiness, mission and Spirit empowerment, and in Biblical family life.

THE WARNING

An elder warned me that if I kept preaching like that there would be trouble, but that I shouldn't back off because it was Biblical and we needed it. He promised that the eldership would stand with me when it came. (After I was shown the exit, he apologetically said he knew what he had said but that he never expected the trouble to come from his own family. I understood.)

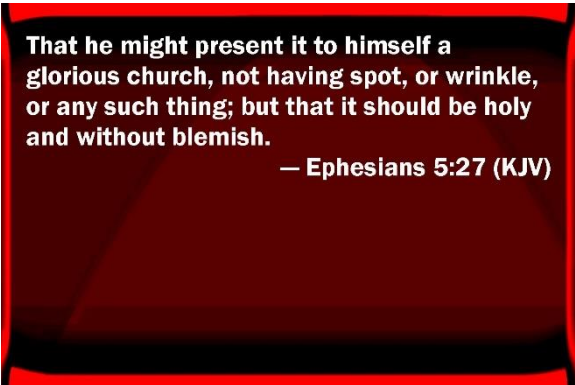
History has since repeated itself, because that message is no more popular today even if the urgency has increased because of the decline in America's morality and in the Church's spirituality. The instruction and warning of [Ezek. 3:4-11](#) are to be taken seriously.

THE PROSTITUTE BRIDE was inspired by scriptures like [Lev. 20:7](#), [Deut. 7:6](#), [Isaiah 35:8](#), [Ezek. 3:17-19](#), [Mt. 28:18-20](#), [Luke 9:23-26](#), [Luke 14:25-35](#), [II Cor. 4:1-6](#), [Eph. 5:25-27](#), [Phil. 1:9-11](#), [Titus 2:11-15](#), [I Peter 1:15-19](#), [I Peter 2:9-12](#), [I John 2:15-18](#), [I John 3:2-3](#), [Rev. 22](#) and more. Read them!

Maybe you should print it off and put it beside your TV remote to read during commercials this weekend, and then tell us how well YOU think we're doing as compared to [Eph. 5:25-27](#) and God's overall expectation for us in life and mission as His special people. It's in both WORD and PDF formats at: www.john2031.com/poetry_and_pietty/the_prostitute_bride.html

Unapologetically Yours,

Ken Stoltzfus



That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

— Ephesians 5:27 (KJV)