

## **Elder Vernon Johnson**

### **Numbers**

#### **One Church or Bride of Christ**

We read in Songs of Solomon that the Lord's dove, his undefiled is but one: Song 6:8 "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. 9 My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her."

There is an erroneous view among religious people today, that there are many that can claim the name of the Lord's church even though they differ in doctrine, practice, and belief. They say that the Lord's church is denominated into different groups espousing different views. In the book of Isaiah this day was prophesied: Is. 4:1 "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."

The Lord's bride is but one, yet we have seven women (false churches) taking hold of one man (Christ) and saying "We will eat our own bread..." that is be fed from the doctrines we have prepared (doctrines of men). Furthermore, they said, "we will wear our own apparel..." Thus we will be clothed with our own self-righteous works and hold to our own doctrine of salvation from sin. Finally, they said, "only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." They wanted the name of Christ to take away the reproach of their adulterous doctrines and practices. They did not want his gospel, or his teachings, or his worship service, or his doctrine of practical godliness to rule their lives, they just wanted to authenticate their own ways by the use of his name.

Often times the bride of Christ is referred to as "the church" indicating she is one of a kind.

We can know whether a body of believers is a part of the Lord's church by observing her doctrines, practices, and the lives of her members. If the doctrine or practice of an assembly does not agree with what the scriptures say, then they can make no claim to being the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. No where in the scriptures can we find Sunday schools, Sunday school superintendents, women preachers, organizations above the local church, tithing, salaried ministry, youth groups, singing with instrumental music accompaniment, choirs, church auxiliaries, bible colleges or seminaries or seminars, or foreign mission boards. Such practices are akin to wearing one's own apparel. The doctrines of gospel regeneration or working one's way to

heaven are foreign to the scriptures and would be akin to eating one's own bread. The Lord's one true bride would not have any of these things.

The Lord's church is satisfied with the doctrines of the scriptures and the manner of worship prescribed for her in the New Testament and the ordinances given to her by her Lord. She is also satisfied with the government given to her by her Husband and strives to live according to thus saith the Lord.