

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

Church of Christ
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VOLUME 9 NO. 48

February 3, 2013

"A Jewel Of Gold In A Swine's Snout"

By Truman Smith

It would not be uncommon, when passing a hog farm to see one or more pigs with a metal ring in its nose. The reason is, these animals use their noses to dig or root-up things. They also find that their nose is quite handy in digging out a place in the mire in which to wallow. But because some are a little too handy at rooting under the fence and getting out, the owner will often have them "ringed" as a preventative; all of which brings us to the words of Solomon: "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion" (**Prov. 11:22**). Thus, while it would not be out of the ordinary to see a ringed pig as we've described what would be very highly inconsistent would be to see "a jewel of gold" in the nose

of a pig. If we were to see that, we'd probably think that farmer fell up a tree!

At the end of a normal school day, an attractive and healthy looking girl, evidently barely in her teens, is walking across the school campus with some other girls toward the parking lot; she walks with grace and dignity, then suddenly lights up a cigarette, takes a puff, and blows the smoke away from her with much force, trying to appear smart and independent; then they ride away toward town. Here is a girl with such promise! She has not yet experienced the damage the smoking will do to her health, how it will affect her skin complexion, wrinkle her face, rob her of a feminine voice, shorten her breath, ruin a possibly beautiful singing ability, etc. Such a sight is "as a jewel in a swine's snout"!

A young, reasonably attractive lady, a member of the local church whose parents and grandparents are doting on her to grow up and some day meet a

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fine young man, a faithful member of the Lord's church, is gradually drawn into the company of her peers and begins to experiment with illegal drugs; the sight of which is "as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout"!

Parents often take note of their daughter's beauty, popularity, talents, good grades in school, obeyed the gospel at a tender age, etc. Soon she is encouraged to go out for twirling, pep squad, dancing, ballerina, band majorette, show business or such. Little does she realize that when she begins to go in such a direction and dress (or undress) for these parts that in God's eyes she is "as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout"!

Once we knew a young teen-age girl, a member of the local congregation where we were preaching at the time, who was told by some that she had an attractive figure and was pretty enough that she should make her bid for "beauty queen." Her picture appeared in a local newspaper, along with a write-up of her aspirations in that direction. She envisioned herself competing for Miss Texas, and perhaps even Miss America! Upon seeing this item in the paper, we immediately met with her privately and warned her of

the sinfulness of such competitions, the bathing suit contests, etc. To this girl's credit, she was able to change her mind and refused to take that direction in her life. Rather, she completed high school (we do not recall if she attended college or not, but possibly did) and fell in love with a young man, a member of the same congregation, and in time married him. The last time we saw her, she was very happily married and had made a fine mother to their children. It is our firm and settled conviction that this lady escaped being "as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout"!

What are we talking about here? In each of the above cases, we can see that it is a blessing from God to have the beauty and talents (**Acts 17:28-29; Jas. 1:17**) that many girls have. Especially is this true when the beauty is inward! But how contradictory or inconsistent with such attractiveness it is for such young ladies to take up such a life that is of a worldly character! It is completely incompatible with such God-given beauty! Such a life is not becoming to "women professing godliness" (**1 Tim. 2:10**). Peter said: "But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is

not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pet. 3:4).

When any young, beautiful, and talented lady aspires to any such worldly activities, it is often nearly impossible to talk them out of such a pursuit. However, we have a responsibility to help our youth to make wise decisions, especially in matters of such importance that might place them in a position where temptation to go wrong is increased. Even at best, they are faced with enough pressure from friends and peers to fashion themselves according to the world that they need all of the help that mature and good people are able to provide without being pushed into such. This is particularly the responsibility of godly parents, in which the father must take the lead. Paul said: "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

So, young people, parents, grandparents, and relatives, remember the words of **Proverbs 11:22**: "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion." Don't ever

encourage a young lady to be a contradiction "as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout."

Said The Farmer To The Fruit Tree

Author Unknown

"Tree, I see all your nice green foliage and your sturdy trunk and root system, but where is your fruit?" "You will notice, farmer, I am more firmly anchored than any tree in the orchard, and I have the most beautiful leaves to be seen anywhere. Further, no broken, sagging limbs, and no scuff marks have I from workmen's shoes on my limbs." "These might be impressive, but I planted you for the purpose of bearing fruit, not to look pretty and preserve yourself.

Suppose all my trees had your attitude! Why have you not borne fruit?" "I tried bearing fruit a few years ago. Some of the beautiful fruit I worked so hard to develop fell to the ground and was lost. The odor was terrible! Also, my limbs would bend and break in the effort, and my whole system was strained. The painful treatment, as the workmen climbed my tender limbs and snapped my branches with their rapid strokes, was

simply too much. To cap off the whole problem with fruit bearing, I produced the most fruit of any tree in the orchard, and I didn't get any glory. Now, under these circumstances farmer, what do you expect?" "I expect, tree, you will make beautiful logs for my fireplace!"

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (**Matthew 7:19-23**; see also **John 15:1-8**).

Our Next Gospel Meeting

March 3-8, 2013

David Lanius