



# OAK GROVE ENCOURAGER

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works” Hebrews 10:24

JANUARY 14, 2007

## Exploiting Our Weaknesses

The National Football League is in full swing and I would like to propose an analogy of football and our spiritual life.

I recently heard a comment made by a player on the field that went as follows: “I am the Devil, because I know your weaknesses and I will exploit them.” There is more truth than poetry in this statement. We must give Satan more credit than to think he would attack us at our strongest point. As a quarterback will take advantage of the rookie defensive cornerback, and throw that direction

more often than not. So it is that Satan will look for a hole in our defense and attempt to slice right through it.

Why do you suppose Christ spoke of His concern for the one sheep that would go astray? **(Matthew 18:12)** It is because when a person is isolated, they are the most vulnerable. As a lion would search for the lone, sick, or lame lamb because it is the easier prey, so this is one of Satan’s modes of operation. When our guard is down, whether we know it or not, that is when the Devil stalks us for the kill. **1 Peter 5:8-9 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.**

If we liken ourselves to a defensive football player, God has given us the instruction and motivation to withstand the Devil’s onslaught, the armor of God **(Ephesians 6:10-17a)**. But God has also supplied us with far more than just the apparatus to defend ourselves, He has equipped us with a weapon to strike back offensively, the word of God **(Ephesians 6:17b...and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;)**. Don’t allow Satan to exploit your weaknesses, hold fast and fight back with truth.

- Bruce J. Dehut

## DART THROWING

Sally related an experience she had in a Bible class taught by Professor Smith. He was known for elaborate object lessons. One day, Sally walked into the classroom and knew they were in for a fun day. On the wall was a big target; on a table were many darts.

Smith told the students to draw a picture of someone they disliked or someone who had made them angry in the past. Sally’s friend drew a girl who had stolen her boyfriend. Another drew a picture of his little brother. Sally drew a former friend, with a great deal of detail, even drawing pimples on the face. Sally was pleased with the effect she achieved.

The class lined up and began throwing darts. Some threw with such force that the targets ripped apart. Sally looked forward to her turn, but was disappointed when the teacher said they were out of time.

As she sat down, thinking how angry she was because she did not have a chance to throw at her target, the professor began removing the target from the wall. Underneath was a picture of Jesus.

A hush fell over the room as each student viewed the mangled picture of Jesus. Holes and jagged marks covered His face and His eyes. Smith said only these words, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me” (Matthew 25:40).

No other words were necessary, the tear filled eyes of each student focused only on the picture of Christ.

- Unknown

Oak Grove church of Christ  
9203 Thixton Lane  
Louisville, KY 40291

Oak Grove  
Church of Christ

(502) 749-9209

Sunday

Bible Class:

9:30 AM

Morning Worship:

10:30 AM

Evening Worship:

5:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class:

7:30 PM

Evangelist:

Bruce J. Dehut

Home Bible Studies Available  
Upon Request

# The most revealing religious irony, of our age!

Bible study on the ichthys (fish symbol)

By Allan McNabb

Perhaps you've seen the fish symbol on Bibles, signs, cars and other places, usually put there to identify the owner as a Christian. Maybe you are like me and wondered how the fish symbol got its start, and what it really means.

The Greek word ichthys (Greek word IXOYE meaning "fish") is an acrostic for "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior." The fish symbol represents the acrostic, and symbolizes salvation in Christ through water baptism — fish are saved in water, and we are saved in water through Jesus (1 Pet. 3:21).

Tertullian (145-220 A.D.) wrote a treatise on baptism contradicting the Cainites (a Gnostic sect) who taught against water baptism. Speaking of Christians he wrote, "we little fishes are born in water, after the example of our Ichthys Jesus Christ. And we have safety in no other way than by permanently abiding in water."

Later in the treatise, Tertullian says that the Cainite doctrine against baptism is a "false doctrine" that "shakes the faith" which can "entirely block a person from receiving the faith. In fact, it opposes the faith on the very principles of which the faith consists!"

Then describing the simplicity of baptism Tertullian says, "With the utterance of a few words, he is dipped, and then rises again not much the [physically] cleaner."

The ichthys (fish symbol ) contradicted the Gnostic doctrines brethren fought against in the early centuries (that men could be saved without baptism). It symbolizes the necessity of baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), that our sins are washed away in baptism (Acts 22:16), and that baptism saves us (1 Pet. 3:21).

Tertullian's writings are valuable for a number of reasons.

\* We see that second and third century Christians were baptized in the same manner as believers in the Bible, as well as members of Christ's church today.

\* We see that second and third century brethren were teaching the truth on salvation and baptism, although powerful and influential Gnostic sects opposed them. Their struggle was similar to our's today, as we struggle to teach the truth among powerful and influential religious sects.

\* We learn the answer to our question: What is the meaning behind the Christian fish symbol?

o It symbolizes salvation in Christ through water baptism.

Today, many people have adopted the Christian fish symbol, believing men are saved without being baptized. Ironically, though, the fish symbol contradicts their doctrine of salvation and baptism, meaning the exact opposite.

This could be the most revealing religious irony of our age.

# Self Preservation

Many things have been done - or words were said  
That pierced the heart - like a bullet of lead  
And though the event came - and soon was gone  
The sting of it all - lingered on and on.

Dwelling on the past - though time has marched on  
Will make us miserable - no mood for a song,  
Because peace and joy - Satan is stealing  
Thus, he alone prospers - if we hold an ill-feeling.

We must forgive others - in a way that is right:  
Leaving their flaws - for only God's sight.  
Sometimes it's impossible - to humanly do  
So we call on the Holy Spirit - to see us through.

When the Lord forgives us - our slate is wiped clean.  
God doesn't hold grudges - or see us as mean.  
Yes, He gives us a chance - for a whole new start.  
He holds no memory - of our mistakes in his heart.

If we can't forgive - like the Lord intended  
We have a miserable life - which can't be mended.  
Because an unforgiving heart - is real devastation  
And forgiving completely - is self-preservation.

Mary Katherine Kohl  
(November 25, 1997)

*Matthew 6:12,14,15*

*12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*

*14 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.*

*15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

## THE LORD'S DAY PRIVILEGE LIST

### Sunday Morning Service

Announcements: **Mark Sharp**

Song Leader: **Steve Smith**

Opening Prayer: **J.O. Smith**

Lord's Table: **Bill Milliner**  
**Brian Shepherd**  
**Robert Hood**  
**Chuck Sharp**

Scripture Reading: **David Shepherd**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Closing Prayer: **Doug Smith**

### Sunday Evening Service

Announcements: **Mark Sharp**

Song Leader: **Steve Smith**

Opening Prayer: **Larry Runner**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Lord's Table: **Bill Milliner**

Closing Prayer: **Randall Hood**