

# Oak Grove Church of Christ

(502) 749-9209

## Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 AM  
Morning Worship: 10:30 AM  
Evening Worship: 6:00 PM

## Wednesday

Bible Class: 7:30 PM

**Evangelist:** Bruce J. Dehut

Home Bible Studies Available  
Upon Request

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



## OAK GROVE ENCOURAGER

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

MAY 28, 2006

## Influence

It has been estimated that each person's life touches a minimum of ten thousand people. This may seem a bit staggering at first but when you stop and consider your life from school days to adulthood it isn't that far off. The word of God describes a person's influence in many different metaphorically ways.

### Salt

*Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."*

In addition to being utilized as a seasoning for food, salt was used agriculturally to fertilize arable land and salt was a symbol of lasting concord, because it protected food from putrefaction and preserved it unchanged. If the salt had lost its

savor the usefulness was gone and it was cast out. So it is with a child of God who has lost their taste for influencing people to live godly, they have lost their effectiveness and God has no use for them. A Christian's ability to communicate is to be as effective as the most robust salt. *Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.*

### Light

*Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."*

Darkness was on the face of the deep at the dawn of creation until God said "let there be light"...and it was good (*Genesis 1:2-4*). The absence of light causes depression and anxiety and God illuminated His creation to bring peace and cause growth. But a veil of darkness was introduced at the fall of Adam and God sent His Son to this planet to reestablish that same peace and the ability to flourish in His people that had been shadowed. *John 12:46 "I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.* So it is we accept no praise for generating the Light ourselves because we are mere reflectors for the True Light of Jesus Christ.

### Leaven

*1 Corinthians 5:6-7 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

The Christ Himself warned His disciples of the destructive influence of the hypocritical teachings

of the Pharisees (*Luke 12:1*). And the apostle Paul in refuting the erroneous instruction by the judaizing teachers that Christians must be circumcised realized the effect one small point of doctrine had in regards to a person's overall salvation. *Galatians 5:7-9 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. 9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump.*

But leaven is not always considered in a negative context, Jesus utilized an analogy of leaven when He referred to the everlasting spiritual realm. *Matthew 13:33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."* No influence is too small, and we should ponder our leaven in respect to the gospel.

### Cancer

*2 Timothy 2:17-18 And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, 18 who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.*

A person's influence can be as detrimental as a life threatening disease. When a dangerous predominance goes unchecked, the death of the local body of Christ will soon follow. We are not to be spiritual hypochondriacs, but we are to be on guard for destructive conditions that may present themselves in the church. *2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves*

swift destruction.

## Be Mindful of Evil Influences

*1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."*

If we delude ourselves in thinking we cannot be influenced by the corruption of the world, Satan already has us. *1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.* The Holy Spirit warned us repeatedly about the persuasiveness of false teachings. *1 Timothy 4:1-2 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.*

The word of God has not left us ignorant of the wiles of the devil and instructs us how to properly behave when we encounter them. *1 Timothy 6:11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*

## Making the most of the opportunities

*Acts 18:4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.*

Nothing has the ability to influence men's hearts more than the word of God. *Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* If souls are to be converted we must possess a similar attitude of Paul when he wrote in *2 Corinthians 5:1a Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*

- Bruce J. Dehut

# SIN IS LIKE A KIDNEY STONE

by Edd Sterchi

As you may or may not know, I just recently had a bout with a rather large (and quite stubborn) kidney stone. The painful reputation of kidney stones is well known. The pain has often described as the worst pain a person has ever suffered even by women who have given birth. It is reported to be more painful than a gun shot. At the height of my pain, I felt worse than someone getting shot while giving birth! While lying in the hospital (with my only companion a big blue IV pump), I had some thinking to do about my episode. It dawned on me that sin is like a kidney stone. Notice, for example:

**A LITTLE BIT CAN DO A LOT OF DAMAGE** - It's amazing how such a little object as a kidney stone can bring a big man literally to his knees in pain. I'm sure you remember the product ad a few years ago that stated, "little dab will do ya"--well, in sin, as in kidney stones, a little dab will do you in! It only takes one unrepented sin to keep you out of heaven (Jas. 2:10).

**YOU HAVE PAIN, THEN IT GOES AWAY-- BUT THE PROBLEM IS STILL THERE** - I can verify that that's the way kidney stones work--the pain comes in waves--sometimes weeks apart. Sin is the same way--it may hurt for awhile, but if we're not careful, we can become numb to it (Eph. 4:17-19).

**IF NOT TAKEN CARE OF IT CAN DO A LOT OF DAMAGE** - People have been known to lose kidneys because they did not

seek the proper help with a kidney stone problem. Sin, also left unchecked or unforgiven, can do a lot of damage to your precious soul (Jas. 1:14-15).

**IT IS VERY PAINFUL TO GET OUT** - As much pain as having the kidney stone in my body was, having it taken out was also very painful (I had to have laser surgery--many must painfully pass them). I heard all the jokes (even made some myself); "this too shall pass"; "everything will come out all right," etc. Sin also is painful (hard) to get out of our lives. It is addictive in nature (Psa. 119:61).

**ONCE GONE, THE RELIEF IS FANTASTIC** - As I type this I am feeling some better. The stone has been removed from my body, and a burden has lifted from my mind. Soon the pain will be totally gone. I am free of my nemesis! The knowledge of sin being removed from our lives (thanks to the sacrifice of Jesus) should bring great relief and joy to our lives (Rom. 5:11).

**ONCE YOU HAVE ONE, THE CHANCE OF RECURRENCE IS VERY HIGH** - It takes discipline (change of diet, following doctor's orders, etc.) to prevent a future kidney stone from coming. Sin is no different--once give in to temptation, it is easy to give in again. We must be following the Great Physician's prescription to prevent future sins from occurring (1 John 1:7-9). Getting rid of my kidney stone was a harrowing experience. I pray that you never get a kidney stone, but more than that, I pray that you do not let sin stay in your life.

## THE LORD'S DAY PRIVILEGE LIST

### Sunday Morning Service

Announcements: **J.O. Smith**

Song Leader: **Steve Smith**

Opening Prayer: **Jim Phelps**

Lord's Table: **Arvil Young  
Larry Runner  
Andy Milliner  
Randall Alford**

Scripture Reading: **Brandon Yates**

Sermon: **Coulter Wickerham**

Closing Prayer: **Wayne Runner**

### Sunday Evening Service

Announcements: **J.O. Smith**

Song Leader: **Steve Smith**

Opening Prayer: **Bill Milliner**

Sermon: **Coulter Wickerham**

Lord's Table: **Arvil Young**

Closing Prayer: **Chuck Sharp**