



# OAK GROVE ENCOURAGER

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

AUGUST 27, 2006

## DON'T FEED IT!

By Bruce J. Dehut

All light seemed to be evaporating from the room as I realized the last bit of oxygen was dispersing from my lungs. It's funny, but not in the humorous way, how split second images can deluge your mind when it identifies impending doom. The sequence of sputtering pictures that flashed into my brain commenced with the first day that adorable little waif first arrived on the scene. My heartstrings had been definitely tugged because of his malnourished features and it only seemed right to give him a little bit of something to eat. He sucked up the food like a Hoover then quietly went away apparently contented.

It was quite some time before he showed up again and he appeared somewhat larger but maybe it was just my imagination. His appetite had definitely grown even if I fooled myself into thinking he was the same diminutive size as before. His visits became more frequent; monthly, weekly, daily and sometimes multiple appearances in a twenty-four hour period. After awhile there was no mistaking the fact that he was enlarging in mass and the ever increasing demands for sustenance were seemingly never ending, it was always "more, more, more!" His cuddly disposition quickly vanished and was replaced by the enormous bulk that now was perched squarely in the middle of my rib cage crushing my sternum like a grape.

My mind raced to find solutions to the questions swirling around inside. What if I had never opened the door, what if I hadn't been taken in by his woeful stares, what if I had withheld that first morsel of food, what if..., what if...? His immensity finally triumphed and the light eventually gave way and my world was transformed into pitch black.

### FEEDING THE FLESH

Each one of us can probably relate to the above narrative in some fashion or another. We all had or have our sinful fleshly appetites that cry out to be fed from time to time. Sometimes we may even blame God for giving us appetites and somehow absolve ourselves of individual responsibility but that is never the case.

*James 1:13-15 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is*

*tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*

The sins of the flesh are very similar to the beast portrayed in the story in that there is never an end to its bottomless stomach. Our sinful yearnings will eventually suck the very life out of us.

*Proverbs 30:15-16 The leech has two daughters-Give and Give! There are three things that are never satisfied, Four never say, "Enough!": 16 The grave, The barren womb, The earth that is not satisfied with water-And the fire never says, "Enough!"*

*Proverbs 27:20 Hell and Destruction are never full; So the eyes of man are never satisfied.*

### TAME THE BEAST

First we need to recognize this internal struggle is no cakewalk and even great philosophers of the past saw the difficulties associated with it.

**I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who overcomes his enemies; for the hardest victory is victory over self.**  
- Aristotle

The apostles found it arduous to cast out certain demons and Jesus provided the prescription that even we can take to heart in our crusade against sin.

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: 6:00 PM

#### Wednesday

Bible Class: 7:30 PM

**Evangelist:** Bruce J. Dehut

Home Bible Studies Available  
Upon Request

*Matthew 17:21 "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."*

### STOP FEEDING IT

The only sure fire way to rid ourselves of this ravenous beast we call habitual sin is to stop feeding it. If we delude ourselves into believing we can handle it by tossing a tidbit to it every now and then it will ultimately consume us. We need to withhold everything from this creature we call sin and starve it to death.

*Colossians 3:5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*

*Galatians 5:24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

### REFOCUS

Putting the beast of sin on a starvation diet is a good start but we also must retrain ourselves to focus on better spiritual things.

*Phlp 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.*

*Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

## God's Wings

An article in National Geographic several years ago provided a penetrating picture of God's wings.

After a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, forest rangers began their trek up a mountain to access the inferno's damage. One ranger found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched statuesquely on the ground at the base of a tree.

Somewhat sickened by the eerie sight, the ranger reached out to knock the bird over with a stick As he gently struck it, three tiny chicks scurried from under their dead mother's wings. The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had carried her offspring to the base of the tree and had gathered them under her wings, instinctively knowing that the toxic smoke would rise. She could have flown to safety but she refused to abandon her babies. When the blaze reached her, the heat had scorched her small body, but the mother had remained steadfast Because she had been willing to die, those under the cover of her wings had lived.

*"He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge"  
(Psalm 9 1:4).*

Remember the One who loves you. and then be different from the masses of the world because of that love.

- Author Unknown

## Return the Cross to Golgotha

I simply argue that the cross be raised again

at the center of the marketplace as well as on the steeple of the church.

I am recovering the claim that Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles;

But on a cross between two thieves: on a town garbage heap;

at a crossroad of politics so cosmopolitan that they had to write His title in Hebrew and in Latin and in Greek...

And at the kind of place where cynics talk smut,

and thieves curse and soldiers gamble. Because that is where He died, and that is what He died about.

And that is where Christ's men ought to be,

and what church people ought to be about.

- Author Unknown.

**Flatter me, and I may not believe you. Criticize me, and I may not like you. Ignore me, and I may not forgive you. Encourage me, and I will not forget you.**

- William Arthur Ward

## THE LORD'S DAY PRIVILEGE LIST

### Sunday Morning Service

Announcements: Brandon Yates

Song Leader: J.O. Smith

Opening Prayer: Doug Smith

Lord's Table: Arvil Young  
Larry Runner  
Chris Runner  
Randall Hood

Scripture Reading: Mark Sharp

Sermon: Bruce Dehut

Closing Prayer: Chuck Sharp

### Sunday Evening Service

Announcements: Brandon Yates

Song Leader: J.O. Smith

Opening Prayer: Brian Shepherd

Sermon: Bruce Dehut

Lord's Table: Arvil Young

Closing Prayer: Wayne Runner