

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

JANUARY 8, 2006

Jumping for Joy

I have read from a few different sources that fleas love to jump. Jumping is a thing that brings more joy to fleas than anything else they could do. When fleas are captured for the flea circus, they are placed in jars and the lids are screwed on. When the fleas jump in the jars, they hit their heads on the lids. They still want to jump, for that is what brings them joy, so they learn to jump just high enough so that they won't hit their heads. The trainer then comes back and takes the fleas out of the jars and puts them in the circus. Even though the fleas now have the whole sky above them, they still do not jump past their now self-imposed limits. Even though the fleas are now free, they have made the limits truly theirs by refusing

to go beyond them. These fleas have turned their pain inward and will not allow themselves to experience the full joy of jumping because of their fear of being hurt again.

Pain is a primary emotion that can manifest itself inwardly or outwardly. It has several emotional by-products which may come from it such as anger, jealousy, depression, hatred, and confusion.

The Lord never told us that emotional pain was sinful; in fact we know many spiritual warriors felt the scars of distress and God saw fit to immortalize these feelings in His book.

Job 30:15-16 Terrors are turned upon me; They pursue my honor as the wind, And my prosperity has passed like a cloud. 16 "And now my soul is poured out because of my plight; The days of affliction take hold of me.

Proverbs 12:25a Heaviness in the heart of man makes it stoop...

Even though bad things happen to good people God provides us a means of relief without merely languishing in our misery. God the Father hears our cries for aide just as He did His Son on the cross when Jesus lamented “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mt 27:46)

Hebrews 5:7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear.

Medicine prescribed: JOY

God realizes that the cares of this life can weigh heavy upon us and the pains of

emotional pain can quite literally make us physically ill as well. Anxiety, worry, anger, can all wear a person out and make them feel imprisoned. But God, being the great physician, has the remedy for everything that ails us and the cure for emotional pain is JOY.

Proverbs 17:22a A merry heart does good, like medicine...

The prophetic word fulfilled by Jesus gives us cause to be joyful because He came to set us free.

*Isaiah 61:1-3 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to **heal the brokenhearted**, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the **opening of the prison to those who are bound**; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 3 To **console those who mourn in Zion**, To give them beauty for ashes, **The oil of joy for mourning**, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."*

I would encourage all of us to allow the joy of God to fill our hearts that comes from obedience to Him and jump as high as possible for His glory.

- Bruce J. Dehut

Tracing the Pattern

I'm sure many of us still remember our first grade teachers handing out onion skinned paper with the instruction to place it over a sheet containing the alphabet and trace the letters as carefully as possible. Little fingers would grasp what seemed to be enlarged pencils, assume the proper holding technique, and meticulously proceed to outline the characters of the original document.

This same idea was the basis of the apostle Peter's words concerning believers that would suffer wrongfully for the faith. *For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: (1 Peter 2:21).* The word "example" in this verse means, "to write under, to trace letters" just like our experience in grade school but with a much more practical and eternal purpose.

Paul, formerly Saul of Tarsus, devoted his life to conforming to the pattern of unselfishness and love illustrated by our Lord and encouraged others to do likewise. *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).* Just as Jesus *"committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2:23)* while being reviled, threatened and eventually crucified, Paul knew that eternal life is only promised

those who continue patiently in doing good (*Romans 2:7*). So it was, that while Paul was confined to a Roman prison he could still exhort the Philippian brethren to *"join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern" (Philippians 3:17).* In addition to "example," the word "pattern" is utilized to describe the conduct of Paul and his companions. The image of a die or stamp used in industry should immediately come to mind as we strive to model our lives to that of the Son of God.

The exhortation was also meant for the youth of the church as we see demonstrated in the writings of Paul to both Timothy and Titus. *"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim 4:12).* And *"in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, 8a sound speech that cannot be condemned" (Titus 2:7-8a).*

Each and every day we need to ponder the path we tread, we need to consider the example we are setting for others, not only for ourselves but for those who would attempt to follow us; our friends, our spouses, our children, our spouses, etc. *Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you (1 Timothy 4:16).*

- Bruce J. Dehut

A Poor Epithet

What is an atheist? "Atheism involves the rejection of any form of theism. To be an atheist is to disavow belief in any kind of god or gods," (IF THERE'S A GOD, WHY ARE THERE ATHEISTS? By R.C. Sproul, p.#18). Atheism is to be distinguished from agnosticism. The agnostic seeks to declare neutrality on the issue; he will neither affirm nor deny God's existence. The atheist, on the other hand, affirms there is no God.

Psalm 10:4 The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.

The nation's most renowned atheist is probably Madalyn Murray O'Hair born April 13, 1919, who won an American citizen's rights to be free from religion as well as free to be for the religion of one's choice in *Murry v. Curlett* which outlawed prayer in public schools (1963) after her son Bill had objected to being forced to participate in school prayers. O'Hair went on to be the founder of the American Atheist Organization and has adversely fought against God almost her entire life.

Psalm 14:1 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good.

O'Hair had made the following statement concerning her gravesite, "I told my kids I just want three words on my tombstone, if I have one. I'll probably be cremated. One is "woman." I'm very comfortable in that role. I've loved being a woman, I've loved being a mother, I've loved being a grandmother. I want three words: Woman, Atheist, Anarchist. That's me."

I would much rather have inscribed on my tombstone "Created in God's image, Faithful believer, Received into glory."

- Bruce J. Dehut

THE LORD'S DAY PRIVILEGE LIST

Sunday Morning Sevice

Announcements: **Brandon Yates**

Song Leader: **Wayne Runner**

Opening Prayer: **Christopher Runner**

Lord's Table: **Kenny Case**
Steve Smith
Andy Milliner
Mark Sharp

Scripture Reading: **David Shepherd**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Closing Prayer: **Mike Shepherd**

Sunday Evening Service

Announcements: **Brandon Yates**

Song Leader: **Wayne Runner**

Opening Prayer: **Chuck Sharp**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Lord's Table: **Kenny Case**

Closing Prayer: **J.O. Smith**