

VIGIL



“Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

~ 1 Peter 5:8

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How Shall The Young Secure Their Hearts?

INFLUENCE

James E. Rogers

Young people must give attention to their influence. Only heaven will tell the number of people converted to the Christ because they observed faithful Christian living on the part of some young person. Jesus taught us about influence in Matthew 5:13-16. It is from this setting that I wish to make some observations. These verses grow out of the characteristics set forth in 5:1-12. When we live according to these, we will be able to exert a good influence in the world.

“Ye are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). Faithful Christians are to humanity what salt is to food. They help to preserve it from total corruption and ruin and help give it taste by their good lives. “Mark Twain said, ‘Let us endeavor so to live that when we come to die, even the undertaker will be sorry’” (Tucker, 367). Job asked: “Can that which hath no savor be eaten without salt” (Job 6:6)? Salt was connected with purity. If the Christian is to be the salt of the earth, he must be an example of purity. He must be pure in his speech (Colossians 4:6), in his thoughts (Matthew 12:34) and in his actions (1 Peter 2:11,12).

Salt is connected with faithfulness to the covenant of Jehovah in the Old Testament (Leviticus 2:13; Numbers

18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5). Salt is different from that on which or in which it is used. The power of the Christian lies in his being different from the world. The Christian must be in the world to exert his influence for good, but he must never be of the world (John 17:15). Christians are the salt of the earth by being proof of the success of the Truth and by being monuments of what Christian principles will make of an individual (1 Thessalonians 1:2-10).

There is a danger that must be considered. The salt could lose its savor. This shows the possibility of apostasy (Mark 9:50; Galatians. 5:4). If this happens the salt is “good for nothing.” The influence one exerts will determine his destiny. Salt that had lost its savor was to be “cast out and trodden under foot of men.” Salt that had lost its savor could become harmful. If it were cast on the soil, it would do harm, therefore it was thrown on the roads (Luke 14:34, 35; Judges 9:45). Christians who lose their savor become harmful to the cause of the Christ and must be cast out (Romans 16:17).

“Ye are the light of the world.” Light is opposed to darkness and overcomes it (Ephesians 5:8-14; Colossians. 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:5;

1 Peter 2:9). The Christian is a light because by his teaching and example he removes ignorance and darkness and leads to the Christ. A light is meant to be seen. There is no greater light for God than the church that is filling its mission in a community. There cannot be secret disciples. The secrecy will destroy the discipleship or the discipleship will destroy the secrecy. A light also warns. Christians warn others of sin and its consequences.

Jesus begins with world visibility, “Light of the world” (5:14; Philippians 2:14-16). Jesus moves to community visibility, “A city set on a hill” (5:14); family visibility, “all that are in the house (5:15) and ends with individual visibility, “Let your light shine” (5:16). Notice the emphasis on “your light,” “your good works” and “your Father.” “A Chinese general put it this way: ‘If the world is to be brought to order, my nation must first be changed. If my nation is to be changed, my hometown must be made over. If my hometown is to be reordered, my family must first be set right. If my family is to be regenerated, I myself must first be’” (Bailey).

EDITORIAL

How Shall the Young Secure Their Hearts?

The question posed in this edition of *Vigil* should be important to every member of the Lord's church. Furthermore, we should make it a top priority to provide families with the resources and training necessary to train up children in the way they should go (cf. Proverbs 22:6). It is the job of the parents (primarily fathers) to bring up children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). However, the Elders/overseers of these families' congregations share an obligation to the children as those who watch over their souls, "as they that must give account" (Hebrews 13:17). Teachers, who instruct the children in Bible classes, will "receive the greater condemnation" (James 3:1). Consequently, all of us, being the "salt of the earth," should have some influence on these children (Matthew 5:13). We are responsible for that influence even though we are not responsible for the decisions they ultimately make (cf. Ezekiel 18:20).

"How shall the young secure their hearts?" We know that this is an important question. For Solomon wrote, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). Children are so precious before they are corrupted by sin. Jesus recognized their value and challenged us to see it as well when He said, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). If only we could protect them from the devil, who seeks to "devour" them (cf. John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8). Yet, they must learn to be sober and vigilant, resisting him and fleeing "youthful lusts" (cf. James 4:7; 2 Timothy 2:22).

Before we can teach children to guard their own hearts from sin, we must first be certain that we are not to

blame for their misguidance. The penalties are great for this devastating error. Jesus said, "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better of him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). We may not all formally teach these children in word, but we cannot escape the power of our examples, whether good or evil. We should be able to say to our young people as Paul did the Corinthians, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Yet, it is common practice in many congregations for adults to ask young people to participate in service projects, evangelism efforts, Bible studies, worship opportunities, and fellowships to which they themselves do not attend. Young people typically are encouraged to fill the front pews of the auditorium during worship services, while many adults fight for a spot on the back row. Who is following whom in these situations? We should not be so quick to demand that our young people do things that we are not willing to do first.

Since the first century, older generations in the church have had to fight the temptation to look down on the youthfulness of others (cf. 1 Timothy 4:12). However, let us not deny them the opportunities for study, support, and service that they so desperately need in order to increase "in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (cf. 1 Timothy 4:13; Galatians 6:1-2, 10; Hebrews 10:25; Luke 2:52). What a tragedy it would be for our pride and selfishness to get in the way of our ministering to these wonderful people! It made Paul happy to write to the young Timothy, whom he called, "my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord" (1 Timothy 1:2). May God bless our congregations with more mentors like Paul.

The goals we set for our young people should never exceed or fall

short of that which the Bible prescribes. In wisdom and simplicity, one of our bishops spoke to the graduating high school seniors of our congregation this year by quoting the words of the apostle Paul: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). This commendation was well said and well thought. What more could we wish for our young people?

Even in our affluent society, there are children who are abused and neglected. Life has mistreated them in all sorts of ways. One in two American children will live in a single parent family at some point in their childhood. One in three is born to unmarried parents.¹ Kids do not get to choose their parents. However, they must choose whether or not they are going to be children of God by putting on Christ (cf. Galatians 3:27). Let us use the Bible as we reflect on how we are training up our children so that we can better empower them to secure their hearts even in their youth (cf. Ecclesiastes 12:1).

Ashley Kizer

¹ "Key Facts About American Children." 2004. [Children's Defense Fund Leave No Child Behind.](http://www.childrensdefense.org/data/keyfacts.asp) Children's Defense Fund, 30 Aug 2004 <<http://www.childrensdefense.org/data/keyfacts.asp>>.

STUDY

Andy Cates

“The gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16). “The holy scriptures...are able to make thee wise unto salvation” (2 Timothy 3:15). “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). God’s Word contains “all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). When observing these passages, the all-sufficiency of the soul-saving Word of God is evident. Thus, study of the Scriptures will greatly aid young people in securing their hearts.

Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary defines the term “study” as a state of contemplation, application of the mental faculties to the acquisition of knowledge.” To pass a biology test or an algebra exam, one must study. There is a test that is infinitely more important to pass, and that is how one lives. A billboard in Florida contains this true thought, “‘Have you read my number one best-seller? There will be a test.’—God.” The Bible states it like this, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10). Notice the wording, “we must all.” There will be no skipping that day or staying home sick. Every accountable person will be present, and will be judged according to how he lived his life.

Every young person should, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). The term “study” in the KJV is rendered “give diligence” in the ASV. It is from the Greek word “spoudazo” which Vine

defines as “to hasten to do a thing, to exert oneself, endeavour, give diligence.” To acquire knowledge of God’s will for our lives requires diligent study of His Word.

Our Lord was approved of God. God said of Christ, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). Why was Jesus approved of God? He did His Father’s will (John 6:38). Likewise, when we submit to our Heavenly Father, we are approved of Him. The wicked meet with shame but the worker of righteousness is not ashamed, for he has handled “aright the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15, ASV). He has not tried to run from Christian duty. He has kept God’s commandments faithfully (1 John 5:3).

Being a young person is not always easy. Temptation seems to be lurking around every corner. But always remember, knowledge of God’s Word can put the devil to flight. Our Lord’s response to the wicked one in Matthew 4:1-11 is a great example for us. He was tempted by the devil but did not give in to Satan’s evil ploys. For each temptation, Christ quoted Scripture, beginning with the words “it is written.” “Then the devil leaveth him” (Matthew 4:11). Never in your life will you come upon anything or anyone more powerful than God. “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15). This verse is connected with the ones previous by the word “but.” If you suffer as a result of your righteous life, do not be filled with terror and have a troubled heart (1 Peter 3:14). “For the eyes of the Lord

are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? (1 Peter 3: 12, 13). Thus, sanctify, set apart as holy, the Lord in your hearts. Do not let persecutions lead you into unfaithfulness as God’s child. Keep foremost in your mind the fact that the Lord has all power and is the Master of your life.

The motto of the United States Coast Guard is “Always ready.” This military service is always ready to rescue endangered lives on the high seas and our nation’s waterways, as well as to defend our country in numerous ways. As Christians, we are to “be ready always” to defend the faith, and know how to answer scriptural questions concerning the soul-saving truth. This requires preparation through the study of God’s Word. We are to carry out this effort in the spirit of “meekness and fear.” Christians are people of humility and this trait has a great effect in leading others to Christ. An arrogant attitude will turn people away and bring reproach upon the Lord’s glorious church.

Young people, study the Word of God daily (Psalms 1:1-3; Acts 17:11), apply it in your lives (James 1:22), and tell others about the saving Gospel of Christ (Matthew 28:19, 20). This will go a long way in securing your precious hearts and the hearts of others.

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COMPANIONS

Randall Medlin

Garth Brooks had a hit song out a few years ago that carried the title and refrain, "I've Got Friends In Low Places." The song was a country and western tribute, albeit unintentional, to the power of worldly companions. Paul warned us of that very dynamic when he wrote, "Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits" (1 Corinthians 15:33, NKJV).

In Jess Lair's little book, I Ain't Much, Baby, But I'm All I've Got, he says that everyone needs at least five good friends, the kind of friends who will go to the wall for you; the kind that will always be there for you no matter how low the places that you may find yourself in. Some wit said we need a minimum of seven friends. He said, "You're going to need them when you die. Six to carry you and one to preach!"

Thus, there are two immutable facts we all need to recognize and accept: (1) We all need friends, not just acquaintances, but good friends, and (2) We are all influenced by those with whom we associate.

All of this adds up to a phenomenon known as "peer pressure." As Garth Brooks' song implies, there are two kinds of peers: good ones and bad ones. The real question is, to what degree do we let the people with whom we associate influence our own behavior and why?

Peer pressure is basically three things:

First, peer pressure is going along with the crowd because it's the popular thing to do in order to be accepted.

Second, it is a feeling pressured to do things you know are wrong. In such a case, decisions are not based upon right and wrong but upon the majority opinion. This is the kind of pressure exerted when someone says, "Everyone else is doing it so I will too." This is when a person checks the temperature of the room before

deciding how they will act. The issues of right and wrong are pushed into the background or are forgotten altogether.

Third, peer pressure is not being sure whether or not you fit in with the crowd, not just the most popular crowd, but any crowd. This kind of peer pressure can cause a person to withdraw and become a loner. That person may not be a misfit at all, but the crowd makes him feel like one, so he is pressured into an unhealthy withdrawal. This can lead to very destructive behavior as witnessed by several school shootings by students in recent years.

What kind of price tag have you put on popularity? If you can answer that question, you can determine the degree you will be influenced by companions.

Answer these three questions honestly:

1) With whom do you want to be popular? You cannot be popular with everyone. You have to make a choice about the crowd with whom you want to be popular. Usually that will either be "friends in low places" who have no spiritual values or "friends in high places" who do.

2) What kind of popularity do you want? You have to make up your mind about in which crowd you want to be a part. Even in a Christian school environment, there are usually both ends of the spiritual and moral scale represented and every increment in between. You have to make a choice between the two because those two crowds usually do not mix! So when deciding about which crowd you want to be a part, ask yourself some questions: "How do their standards of moral behavior match up to mine?" "How much am I willing to sacrifice or compromise in order to be accepted by these people?" "What price am I willing to pay for being a part of this crowd?"

3) Why do I want to be popular, and is it worth it? Some people go along with the crowd even when they don't want to because they are afraid of going it alone. There is no denying that it is easier to just be one of the crowd, but that is not the healthiest response either spiritually or emotionally.

Do not misunderstand. There is nothing wrong with being accepted and popular so long as you do not have to pay a terrible price. The Bible says that the first requirement of a transformed life is a refusal to be poured into the same mold as the world (Romans 12:1-2). James reminds us, "Friendship with the world is enmity with God" (4:4). John writes, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 23:15). Moses exhorted, "Follow not a crowd to do evil" (Exodus 23:2).

God has something to say about the price of popularity. Popularity is fine and good and can even be used by God to bring about good. Popularity and acceptance are wonderful things as long as you sway the crowd toward what is right instead of letting the crowd push you into what is wrong.

Remember that you can win over peer pressure! No one can make you do what you know is wrong. Vow to be yourself, and what God intended you to be. Someone said, "Everyone is born an original but dies a copy." That is okay if we have committed ourselves to being around the right kind of people (1 Corinthians 11:1). You can deal with peer pressure and win over it, but you have to make up your mind to do so. It will not be easy but the rewards are eternal!

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WHAT SHOULD I BE AS A PARENT

Ronnie Hayes

Parenting is tough! Children don't come with an operation manual. Yes, I know and realize that the book we must use is the Bible. The sad thing is many could care less about what the Bible has to say. It seems that in our society our children are left to fend for themselves. They shouldn't have to do that. Children are deserving of parents who will take their responsibility seriously! "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Socrates once stated, "Could I climb to the highest place in Athens, I would lift my voice and proclaim: 'Fellow Citizens, why do ye turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth and take so little care of your children to whom one day you must relinquish it all!' Why do we care so little for our children? Many parents want to be "pals" with their children, not parents. Others want to "give" them everything and they grow up with no work ethic. Some "allow" their children to make up their own minds and forget about "instructing" them in right and wrong. What is the God-given role of a parent?

As parents, we are to teach our children. Listen to the words of God to the parents of Israel. "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deuteronomy 6:7). One of the greatest gifts you could instill in your child is the thirst for knowledge. Christ said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). The Bible will impart to them all the knowledge they need.

Peter said it gives us, "...all things that pertain unto life and godliness..." (2 Peter 1:3). Be sure to teach your children the way.

It is our role to train our children. Solomon recorded, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Vines says of training that it is the "cultivation of sound judgment and prudence; recall to one's senses" (vol. 4, p.44). I've watched men train animals. It takes time, effort, energy, money, praise, discipline, love, and patience. We cannot expect our children to love God, attend faithfully, work in his vineyard and seek the lost when we send them to church, talk about service and do nothing! It is difficult work to train an animal. No lazy, slothful person will do it. The same is true about children. It is difficult, time consuming, yet rewarding work. Are we training our children?

We must provide for our children. Paul told Timothy, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Timothy 5:8). Yes, we are to provide for the physical needs of our children and seemingly, most parents do this. On the other hand, it is vitally important for parents to provide for the spiritual as well. Do you take time to talk to your children about spiritual matters? They are going to have questions about subjects they hear at school. Do you help them to know how to answer those questions?

We cannot over look the fact that we are to nurture our children. Nurturing involves the "instruction and correction, discipline" (Vines; vol. 1, p. 183) of children. When we fail to discipline our children, we are doing them a great injustice. Solomon wrote, "He that spareth his rod hateth

his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs. 13:24). "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying" (Proverbs 19:18). "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Proverbs 29:15). I would never stand for a child to be abused. Many have the opinion that spanking is abuse. I respectfully disagree. As a parent you can make any excuse and every excuse for not disciplining your children, but the fact remains "The worst case of child abuse is a child left uncorrected!"

Our children are to be under our control. In the qualifications of elders we find the term, "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity" (1 Timothy 3:4). This is not just a rule for elders. All Christians should have their children under control. Our children should follow, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1).

The foundation for everything we do is love. Paul told Titus that the older women should teach the younger women "...to love their children" (Titus 2:4). It is beyond my understanding how any parent could not love their child. When we truly love our children we will make sure that God is first, foremost and always in their life.

What kind of parents are we being?

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INVOLVEMENT

Bobby Liddell

How shall the young secure their hearts by involving themselves in the work and worship of the church?

The word "young" brings to mind innocence and purity (cf. Matthew 18:1-6; 19:13-15), as well as energy and enthusiasm. It speaks of the newness of the present and bright prospects of the future. Young people have responsibilities and opportunities, some of which are peculiar to them. While many focus on the negatives of youth, we should also consider the positives of Christian young people taking their part in good works to bring glory to God (Matthew 5:16).

Are there limitations of youth? Youth lacks the knowledge, experience, and wisdom of age. Thus, for example, God specified certain qualifications of "elders" which demand age and wisdom. There are some limitations, but these should not keep any young Christian from doing all he can do and being all he can be.

Are there benefits of youth? Certainly. Those who choose to follow Christ early in life avoid many of the dangers and downfalls that could come their way. Young people should maintain the purity of youth, not even beginning to sully themselves with the wickedness of the world, but abstaining from the temptations to taste the alluring but momentary sinful pleasures (Hebrews 11:25).

Paul wrote to the young preacher Timothy charging him to be "an example of the believers" in every aspect and attitude of life showing himself to be pure, upright, and godly (1 Timothy 4:12). By attendance to and application of the abilities and obligations entrusted to him, giving himself wholly (completely) to them, Timothy could show real progress in his living for Christ ("that thy profiting may appear to all" [v. 15]). What a tremendous example such a life by any young person can be!

Timothy's responsibilities, like all young people, were (1) to himself: "Take heed unto thyself"; (2) to the Scriptures: "and to the doctrine"; (3) to be steadfast: "continue in them"; and (4) to salvation of his own soul and of the souls of others: "for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (v. 16). Be assured he could not accomplish this without being involved.

How can young people be involved?

Young people can involve themselves in being present for all the assemblies of the local congregation of the Lord's people (Hebrews 10:25). Far too often, ball games, school activities (such as concerts, trips, etc.), and homework become excuses for sin. Rearing three children who attended public school, and who took part in sports, bands, orchestras, clubs, trips, and other activities, and who had homework every night, was a challenge, but not one of them ever missed a regularly scheduled assembly, Gospel meeting, vacation Bible school, or any other such gathering because of such activities. It was not always easy, but it was always right for them to assemble with the saints. Thank God for young people who have their priorities straight (Matthew 6:33)!

Young people can involve themselves in worshipping God in spirit and truth (John 4:24). Instead of just being present, become involved. Sing, making melody in the heart (Ephesians 5:19). Pray, fervently and according to the will of the Father (James 5:16; 1 John 5:14). Give, from your allowance or your wages, as you have been prospered (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). Study, bringing your Bible, pen and paper, and a thirst for learning, and listen intently as the preacher preaches the Word (Acts 2:42; 2 Timothy 4:2). As members of the church, young people can commemorate the death of Christ by partaking of the Lord's Supper (1

Corinthians 11:23ff). Young people can and must worship God acceptably. Young men should take part, as able, in order to prepare themselves to lead in worship. Wise elders will encourage such.

Young people can involve themselves in the work programs of the local church. Young people can visit the sick, shut-in, bereaved, needy, delinquent, newcomers, and visitors to the services. Often, their visits make a greater impression. If too young to go by themselves, they can accompany parents or others. Workdays can be great times for young people to show their participation--whether cleaning and repairing, preparing food or clothing, or helping to prepare tracts, bulletins, or teaching materials for mailing. There are many opportunities--for all ages--to do good (Acts 10:38).

Young people can involve themselves in Bible classes, being on time, with Bible and class book in hand, having studied and prepared, paying attention, politely taking part, and, for the benefit of those not members, supporting the sound words of the teacher. One of the biggest complaints against young people in the church is of a lack of respect for Bible class teachers, and a lack of preparation for class. Let's change this.

Finally, young people can involve themselves in winning souls. Youth is a time of great trial and uncertainty for many who stand at the crossroads of life facing decisions they have not encountered before. Christian young people can show the example of godliness, teach the Word of salvation and hope, extend a helping hand and a listening ear, and be the difference in the eternal destiny of their peers.

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THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS

Hugo McCord

Three times the Israelites were commanded (1 Chronicles 16:29; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 96:9, KJV) to “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,” and one time Christians were told (Psalm 110:3; Matthew 22:41-46, KJV) in advance that they would participate “in the beauties of holiness.”

Holiness (godesh, 2 Chronicles 31:18; hagiosune, 2 Corinthians 7:1) is (1) being separated from fleshly defilements and “abominable customs” (Leviticus 18-30; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Peter 1:1-16) and (2) being attached to the Lord in love with all of one’s heart, soul, and might (Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-38). Beautiful holiness is internal and invisible, a “faith working through love” (Galatians 5:6). Without holiness “no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

Beauty (hadrath, Proverbs 20:29; horaios, Romans 10:15), the opposite of ugliness, is attractiveness, splendor, and loveliness. Ugly Old Testament worship was offering animal sacrifices (zebahirim) by unholy Jews (Isaiah 1:2-17). Ugly New Testament worship by unholy Christians is threskeia (the “ceremonies” of worship without care for “orphans and widows,” Thayer, p.292; James 1:26-27).

Thus the only worship that the Lord has ever considered beautiful is that which is done by holy, self-

denying people (Matthew 16:24: 1 Peter 1:16).

It is sad that the beautiful words spoken to Jews (1 Chronicles 16:29; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 96:9), and in advance to Christians (Psalm 110:3; Matthew 22:41-46) have been mistranslated by scholars thinking that God was demanding “apparel worn at solemn festivals” (Gesenius, p. 218). It is true that Jewish priests were required to wear “holy garments... for glory and for beauty” (Exodus 28:2, 40), but the non-priests had no such requirement.

The custom specifying acceptable worship (1 Chronicles 16:29; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 96:9) for non-priests and for Christians (Psalm 110:3) called for nothing external, but only inward devotion, heart-felt consecration, total commitment to the Lord. But the ASV scholars erred in inserting the word “array” in the commandment “worship Jehovah in holy array” both for the Jews (1 Chronicles 16:29; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 96:9) and for Christians (Psalm 110:3). The NASB also uses “holy array” in one place for the Jews (1 Chronicles 16:29) and in one place for the Christians (Psalm 110:3). For some reason, in two other citations for the Jews, the NASB uses “holy attire” (1 Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 96:9).

If physical garments, uniforms for worship, were required for acceptable worship by both the Jews and

Christians, then the “sons of God” (Job 1:6; Psalm 29:1-2), believed to be angels, will have to put on vestments, for they are given the same command given to Jews and Christians: “Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” (Psalm 29:1-2, KJV), or, as in the ASV: “Worship Jehovah in holy array.”

Not only did the ASV and the NASB err in adding the word for a physical vestment, but also the NIV has added another word not in the Hebrew text: “his” referring to God. Three times (1 Chronicles 16:29; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 96:9) the Jews are told, and one time (Psalm 29:12) the “sons of God” are told, to “worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness,” but he “his” is omitted in the remarks about Christians (Psalm 110:3). It is true that God is “holy” (Exodus 15:11; Psalm 60:6; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8), but textually in 1 Chronicles 16:29; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 96:9 the holiness of the Jews is spoken of, not “His” (God’s), and in Psalm 29:1-2 the holiness of the “sons of God” is spoken of, not “his” (God’s). Then for some reason, the NIV in Psalm 110:3 pictures some “troops” who are “Arrayed in holy majesty.”

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Influence by James E. Rogers ----- continued from page 33

Jesus taught that men will see the good works of the Christian (1 Peter 2:12; Philemon 4:9) and glorify God. "Men do not praise the street lamps which protect them from robbery and assault, but they praise the municipal administration which furnishes the lamps" (McGarvey and Pendleton, 235). Peter reminded his readers that some "may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:12).

In addition to these two illustrations by Jesus, the Bible uses leaven to teach about influence. Sometimes the leaven (influence) is good and sometimes the leaven (influence) is bad. Leaven is small in the beginning but it grows to consuming proportions as it spreads rapidly (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). Influence is seen in the demeanor of a person's life. Jesus warned his disciples to "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy (Luke 12:1). Influence spreads rapidly and can have a lasting effect upon others.

Paul admonished, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Every Christian should be able to say to others as Gideon said to his followers, "Look on me, and do likewise . . . as I do, so shall ye do" (Judges 7:17). When this is the case, our influence is for good and heaven will be the destiny of those who follow us.

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SHALL I FORCE MY CHILDREN TO GO TO CHURCH?

"Shall I make my child go to church?" Yes, and with no discussion about the matter. Are you startled? Why? How do you answer Junior when he comes to breakfast Monday morning and announces to you that he isn't going to school anymore? You know! Junior goes! How do you answer him when he comes in very smudged and says, "I'm not going to take a bath." Junior bathes, doesn't he?

Why all this timidity then in the realm of his spiritual guidance and

growth? Going to wait and let him decide what church to go to when he is old enough? Quit kidding. You didn't wait until you were old enough. You didn't wait till you were old enough to decide whether you would remain dirty or be clean. Do you wait until he is old enough to decide if he wants to take medicine when he is sick?

What will you say when junior announces that he is not going to church? That's easy to answer. Just be consistent. Tell him, "Junior, in

our family we all go to church and that includes you." Your firmness and example will furnish a bridge over which the youthful rebellion travels into rich and satisfying experiences in personal religious living.

The parents of America can strike a telling blow against the forces, which contribute to our juvenile delinquency, if our mothers and fathers will take their children to worship our Lord regularly.

J. Edgar Hoover