

PULPIT NOTES

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INFLUENCE

I. THE WORD OF GOD CLEARLY TEACHES THAT WE CAN BE INFLUENCED BY OTHERS TO SIN AND THAT WE CAN INFLUENCE OTHERS TO SIN.

- A. There is a verbal form in Hebrew called the **Hiphil** which is causal. [See **Appendix**]
1. When the verb "SIN" is used in the Hiphil form, the understanding is: "**to cause to sin.**"
 2. Its primary use in the Old Testament is in reference to the kings who did evil in the sight of the Lord and "**caused**" the children of God to sin. Solomon's wives were also said to have "caused" Solomon to sin.
- B. The teaching that we can influence others to sin is found in the New Testament in the many strong denunciations of false teachers who are charged with leading (influencing, causing) the weak to stumble. The very fact that we are warned about being led astray, itself teaches that it is possible to be adversely influenced by others.
1. Revelation 2:20 "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and **to seduce my servants to commit fornication**, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."
 2. Revelation 2:14 "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, **who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel**, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."
 3. 2 Timothy 3:13 "But evil men and **seducers** shall wax worse and worse, **deceiving**, and being deceived."
 4. 2 Timothy 2:17 "And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is **Hymenaeus and Philetus**; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and **overthrow the faith of some.**"
- C. We find in the New Testament the teaching that we are **not to lead other people astray**.
1. It is specifically taught with the concept of being a stumbling block or offending.
 - a. Romans 14:13 "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, **that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.**"
 - b. 1 Corinthians 8:9 "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a **stumblingblock to them that are weak.**"
 - c. Matthew 18:6 "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."
 2. It is taught with the teaching of watching out for false teachers (Galatians 1:6-9).
- D. **We need to understand the seriousness of leading others away from God.** In the Old Testament one was put to death for leading others away from God (Deuteronomy 13:6-9). Deuteronomy 13:6 "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the

wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which *is* as thine own soul, **entice thee** secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods . . . thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.”

II. WE CAN BE INFLUENCED BY OTHERS TO SIN, BUT WE ARE STILL RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR SIN.

- A. **QUESTIONS:** If someone else is partly responsible for leading me down the road to ruin, will God lighten his punishment of me because someone else led me down the wrong path? That is, is it not the case that my sinning is not totally my fault? Should not there be some blame sharing? For that matter, if I can prove that I would not have sinned were it not for someone else, cannot the total blame be placed upon the one who caused me to sin leaving me fully innocent? Does not God acknowledge the part that all play in my sin?
- B. It is not uncommon in our society to hear people blaming others for their own situation. We are taught that our environment is responsible for our actions.
1. **If a person steals**, it is not their fault; it is the fault of the neighborhood in which they were raised.
 2. **If a person is a drug abuser**, it is because they were raised in a family environment that did not consist of the traditional family unit.
 3. **If a person runs the streets and kills**, it is because the government did not provide youth centers or basketball courts.
 4. **If I am addicted to alcohol**, someone else drove me to drink.
- C. Understanding the environment out of which one comes only **helps with seeing the development of the sin**, it does not excuse the sin. No matter the environment, we **make choices** in life. We make the **choice** to run in the streets and kill. We were not made to run in the streets and kill by a lack of youth centers. **Life is full of choices**.
1. Two children raised in the same environment can come out differently by the choices that they make. One can choose morality; one can choose immorality. One can choose to run around with the “wrong crowd”; one can choose to select their associates wisely.
 2. Understanding that your boy friend left you helps to explain your motive for driving recklessly, but we cannot blame your boy friend for your accident.
- D. **We must rise above our environment.** Does God look at the society in which we live and then excuse our sin?
1. **Consider Noah before the flood.** Does God say, “I see the sinfulness of your environment and therefore will not hold you accountable if you become corrupt like all your neighbors”? In Genesis 6, God did not look at the sinfulness of the world and conclude that because everyone was sinful that he was going to change his attitude toward sin. Following the faithless in folly will result in Noah drowning with the disobedient.
 2. **Consider Joseph in Egypt.** Regardless of the pressure for pleasure from Potiphar’s wife, the lure of leisure in Pharaoh’s house, or the poison of power as head of Egypt, Joseph was not influenced by environment.
 3. **Consider Daniel in Babylon.** From what is revealed in scripture Daniel was an Israelite in whom was no guile.
 4. Does God say to us, “I know that it was because of taxation, social injustice, inflation, and high medical expenses that you killed a man and robbed a bank, therefore, you are not accountable for your sins”?

5. Or does he say, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13)?

- E. Regardless of the influence of others upon us, we are responsible. It is true that those who have influenced us evilly will have to give account for their actions, but we also will have to give account for following them.
- F. Many are hoping that God will, not forgive their sin, but rather, excuse their sin. It is almost as if they are saying, "Yes, Lord, I know I have sinned, but can you blame me under the circumstances?"
- G. When it comes to sinning or not sinning, we cannot appeal to the circumstances. We cannot say that adultery is justifiable because of the circumstances. We cannot say that stealing is justifiable because of the circumstances. We cannot say that lying is justifiable because of the circumstances. Circumstances justifying our sins almost puts us into the persuasion that we were forced into sinning – the old "the devil made me do it" attitude [See 1 Corinthians 10:13]. Appealing to circumstances suggests that God would not be just if he were to condemn us.

III. NO MORE GENERALITIES – WHAT DOES THIS LESSON ON INFLUENCE MEAN TO ME?

- A. After coming under my influence and marrying me, is my mate closer to God or further away from God? That is, is my mate more righteous in their ways, more patient, kind, and loving? Or, have they lessened their love, become more worldly, and more compromising in their morals while being under my influence?
- B. Have I let my mate evilly influence me? Do I attend worship less?; say fewer and less fervent prayers? Do the elders of the church have to depend less upon me?
- C. Am I adversely influencing and jeopardizing my children's salvation? **BE HONEST**. What do my children see in me, maybe what I cannot see in myself? Do they see dedicated service to the Lord, or do they see obligatory, grudging, and heartless homage?
- D. How do our children process, or what conclusions are they drawing when we try to explain to them why the whole family is not going to worship on the first day of the week?
- E. Let it not be said of us, as it was said of the Kings of Israel, that we "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord" in influencing our own family to sin.

IV. APPENDIX

A. CONJUGATION OF THE HEBREW VERB – THE CAUSATIVE FORM.

1. There are many questions that arise every time we examine even a single word of the Bible. Let us begin by observing that Hebrew verbs are found in different types (**conjugations**) all with tenses and that each form can shed light on the meaning of the word in the sentence.
2. The general conjugations are:

a.	Qal	Root meaning	"He killed."
b.	Niphal	Reflexive, sometimes passive	"He was killed."
c.	Piel	Intensive active	"He killed violently."
d.	Pual	Intensive passive	"He was killed violently."
e.	Hiphil	Causative active	"He caused to kill."
f.	Hophal	Causative passive	"He was caused to kill."
g.	Hithpael	Intensive reflexive	"He killed himself."

3. Only a few verbs appear in all seven conjugations. A word of caution is necessary: one must consider many factors and not just the conjugation before meaning can be ascribed to a word. It is true that a little knowledge is dangerous. **This is not a grammar lesson and after the lesson we will not know all there is to know about conjugations and their meanings.**
4. **VARIOUS SCRIPTURES WHERE THE HIPHIL (causative form of the verb) IS USED WITH THE WORD "OFFER."**
- 1 Sam 6:15 "And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold *were*, and put *them* on the great stone: and the men of Bethshemesh **offered** burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD."
 - 1 Ki 9:25 "And three times in a year did Solomon **offer** burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the LORD. So he finished the house."
 - 2 Chr 8:12 "Then Solomon **offered** burnt offerings unto the LORD on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch."
 - 1 Sam 13:9 "And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he **offered** the burnt offering."
 - 1 Sam 13:12 "Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and **offered** a burnt offering."
 - 2 Sam 6:17 "And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David **offered** burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD."
 - 1 Ki 3:4 "And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon **offer** upon that altar."
 - 1 Ki 3:15 "And Solomon awoke; and, behold, *it was* a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and **offered** up burnt offerings, and **offered** peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants."

B. KINGS DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD BY LEADING THE NATION AWAY FROM PROPER WORSHIP OF GOD.

1. The kings over God's people were in part judged by how they led the nation in worship to God. When the kings did not follow the prescribed **pattern of worship** they were said to have done **evil in the sight of the Lord**.

Baasha	1 Ki 15:34; 16:2.	Zachariah	2 Ki 15:9.
Zimri	1 Ki 16:19.	Menahen	2 Ki 15:18.
Omri	1 Ki 16:25.	Pekahiah	2 Ki 15:24.
Ahab	1 Ki 21:22.	Pekah	2 Ki 15:28.
Ahaziah	1 Ki 22:52.	Hoshea	2 Ki 17:2.
Jehoram	2 Ki 3:2-3.	Manasseh	2 Ki 21:2,16.
Jehu	2 Ki 10:29, 31.	Jehoahaz II	2 Ki 23:32.
Jehoahaz	2 Ki 13:2,6.	Jehoiakim	2 Ki 23:37.
Jehoash	2 Ki 13:11.	Jehoiachin	2 Ki 24:9.
Jeroboam II	2 Ki 14:24.	Zedekiah	2 Ki 24:19.