

The Yeast Principle

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Galatians 5:9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Leaven is an old world word for yeast. People who make bread and want it to rise put yeast in it and leave it set for a time. That's how they get those fluffy loaves of bread! This scripture uses the principle of yeast spreading throughout rising bread to make a point about a principle. We see this principle everywhere. Here are some examples.

Somewhere in Kentucky Lake, maybe in the mid 50's, some barge or tugboat dropped a small cutting from a Eurasian milfoil plant into the lake as it was passing through from some part of the Tennessee River system. By the early 60's we began to see milfoil in Kentucky Lake in a few small coves. By the late 60's it had become a scourge there and infested at least 4,000 acres of water, showing up in almost every cove in the lake. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Somewhere in Lake St. Clair near Detroit, Michigan during the 1970's or 80's, a ship passed through from sites in or near Russia, the Netherlands, or Great Britain and on the side of that ship were a couple of very small animals (1/4th to 1.5 inches) called zebra mussels. They detached from that ship, settled to the bottom of the lake and began to propagate. By 2008, zebra mussels had infested the entire great lakes system, the St. Lawrence, Ohio, Cumberland, Missouri, Tennessee, Colorado, and Arkansas Rivers. clogging pumps, covering barges and ships, competing with native mussels for space and food, causing millions of dollars in damage every year. The history of this little trouble-making invasive species tells us that it will finally fill every river in America. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Somewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, last night a small mosquito bit a child as he walked by a stagnant mud puddle. In a few days that child will start having chills and fever, vomiting, anemia and other symptoms. From one small mosquito bite, and maybe only a minute number of malaria parasites of the genus Plasmodium will come millions of offspring reproducing in the child's blood. They will move throughout his body, attacking and destroying millions of red blood cells until they kill him. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

A small group of Marxists started an organization called Black Lives Matter, about 1 or two years ago. At that time, most Americans agreed with international statistics which show that the United States is the least racist nation on earth. Today, however, with millions of dollars being given to BLM by multinational corporations that want to see America collapse and become a global community, BLM has managed to convince a majority of U.S. citizens that the U.S. is the most racist nation on the planet. The U.S. is still graded as the least racist nation on earth. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump!"

About 6,000 years ago, one transgression against God was acted out by two people. Today, approximately 7.8 billion people transgress some commandment of God each day. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Demonstrate the food coloring in the glass of water. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

I used these illustrations to make us aware that small things have a way of growing into big ones. We rarely think about the effects of small things that happen in our world. We don't usually stop to consider how the principle written by Paul in our text works in regard to so many things in creation. We want to think about some of these things today.

I. Let's see the principle at work in Israel 4,000 years ago when they are in Egypt and when they were brought out by the Lord.

- ❖ The profanity of Egypt was the leaven that saturated the thinking and behavior of the offspring of Jacob in the days of old:
 - It was the thankless use of the many resources which the Egyptians enjoyed that gave the Israelites the idea that they had been mistreated and from which they developed an entitlement mentality out in the wilderness (see **Exodus 16:1-3**)
 - **1** And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. **2** And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. **3** And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill

this whole assembly with hunger.

- “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
- It was the idolatry of Egypt that became the leaven by which the Israelites were saturated and from which they got the idea about golden calves to be used for worship (see **Exodus 32:1-4**)
 - **1** And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. **2** And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me. **3** And all the people brake off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron. **4** And he received *them* at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.
 - “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”

II. Now, let’s see the principle at work in this modern age.

- ❖ It is the profanity of the world and the flaky nature of our old man that is the leaven that saturates our lives and alters our behavior negatively.
- ❖ The compromising life styles of our worldly counterparts has leavened our thinking about compromise. That is, we often find ourselves doubting whether moral and ethical compromise is really compromise.
 - Examples:
 - the adage, “honesty is the best policy” is a compromise statement because **honesty is the only policy**. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
 - **Sensual dressing among our peers in public** has leavened our thinking so that we as professing Christians begin to mimic them. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
 - The absolute **lack of business ethics among businessmen** of the world has leavened our thinking so that we begin to imagine that it is OK to practice unethical business schemes. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
 - The extremely lucrative network that exists between **politicians and lobbyists** and big business has become a permanent fixture in our government and thousands of politicians have discovered that they can

become rich by simply using their political clout to get goodies for lobbyists and big business who will then pay them enormous money to do just that. For an entire generation of politicians this has become normal business...perfectly legitimate...when in fact it is nothing more than "pay to play" and is a moral sellout. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

- The **obsession by Americans for the good life**, for the gaining and using of possessions; their obsession with worshiping mammon has **leavened our thinking so that many believers** have dedicated their lives and energies to getting and having worldly goods. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

- People of the world and other church members **treating the Lord's day like it is just another work or recreation day** has leavened some Christian thinking so that they have become profane about their own consecration of the day of worship. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

- Seeing most of the religious world **treat tithing like it is an option** has led some professing Christians to think that it is an option, and that it is not important. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

- **Profane talk and cursing by the rest of the world** around us has led some believers to question whether all that foul language is really sinful or not. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

- **Ephesians 4:29** Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

- **Col. 3:8** But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

- There are many other examples to demonstrate that the world can act as a leavening agent on believers; and if believers begin to be influenced by that leavening power of the world, they truly become corrupted by it.

III. There are positive aspects of this principle, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

- ❖ A little bit of influence from God's Word on the heart of a human can saturate the soul with new life. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."
 - It is no wonder that scripture declares that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes.
 - This is the reason that the Word of God is called the sword of the Spirit

- A human saved by the work of God in his soul begins to experience a leavening process brought about by the Holy Spirit
- ❖ A little bit of faithfulness to be obedient to God in the things we know can transform our entire lives. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
- ❖ A minute effort in service to God can saturate our being with a sense of God’s approval. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
- ❖ A little time in prayer...just God and yourself...can permeate (that means to spread through) your life with comfort and assurance. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
- ❖ A Sunday spent worshipping with the church can spread the leaven of Christian love, unity and common purpose through our beings. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”
- ❖ A righteous deed done in the name of Jesus can leaven our souls with joy at the opportunity and privilege of representing our Lord and pointing someone to Him