

NEWS AND VIEWS
MOUNT OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH
3500 Edwards Mill Road, Raleigh, North Carolina 27612-5362

Phone... (919) 787-1910
E-mail: office@mobic.org
Web Page: www.mobic.org

*“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”*

SAM GORE, Senior Pastor

NANCY MCBRAYER, Office Manager

EDITH JACKSON, Prayer Coordinator

MIKE KING, Maintenance Supervisor

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My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

In today's society, it is common for people to drink socially, even church people. The definition of a social drinker probably depends upon who's defining it. Some people think that a couple of drinks doesn't diminish their capacity. Others will tell you that a couple of drinks hinder judgment to the point that someone needs a designated driver. Designated drivers have probably saved more people from grief than we will ever know. Only God knows how many lives have been saved because some drunkard did not get behind the wheel of a vehicle and cross the centerline into oncoming traffic. Many drunken people have woken up the following morning in their own bed, rather than in a jail cell, thus sparing their family from hardship and embarrassment or even worse, suspended driver's licenses, court costs, attorney fees and prison sentences. The designated driver is often the target of the drunk's animosity because he, *or she*, has been deprived of his, *or her*, car keys. The designated driver knows that a greater good for many others will result from his intervention. Our experience with sin is like driving under the influence. Often we don't realize how incapacitated we really are. Entangled in sin, we don't realize the danger we are to others, especially those in the family of faith, not to mention the grief we can bring about by continuing on this destructive path.

Have you ever been on the receiving end of someone intervening in your life? Perhaps you resented their meddling and even thought they had no right to confront you. It is often openly embarrassing and always painful. Many times we are tempted to write off this so-called friend. But a more painful trial can occur if no one steps in to warn and your sin runs its course, leaving behind the scarred remains of the wreckage of lives that sin leaves in its wake.

From the Lord's perspective, after suffering the indignity of being held accountable, the learning process can truly begin. When we are in denial of the nature of sin and its grip on us, we often are not in a teachable state of mind. However, once we admit our helplessness, we are ready to receive help. God Himself comes in the midst of corrective discipline and we begin to experience the restorative nature of His grace. As we study the passage before us today, be thankful for the one who cares enough to confront. And also be encouraged to be willing to get involved in the lives of those you love. Even "social sinning" brings destruction and death. Consider these thoughts...

I. WHEN A FRIEND DRIVES DRUNK, WE TAKE HIS KEYS.

Intervention can save someone from death's destruction. What we do or don't do in response to his condition matters to him and others he encounters. His condition is dangerous and deadly.

II. A FRIEND WILL NOT ALLOW ANOTHER TO KEEP TRAVELING SIN'S PATH. Intervention can save from death's destruction. A friend is someone that is willing to fight to save the one that is helpless to save himself. Confrontation is critical.

III. AS A BELIEVER, WE ARE ONE ANOTHER'S DESIGNATED DRIVER. Other Christians are often the best deterrent to sin. Accountability to the truth, to God and one another is crucial to spiritual growth. Sinning is straying from the truth...so when we intervene, let's speak the truth in love. Friends don't let friends wreck their lives.

May is a month full of graduation celebrations...so let's get high on life and keep on living!

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam