

ABIDE IN JESUS (4)

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God Calls Us to be Influencers

- Every Christian is called to be an influence
 - The divine mandate for believers to impact the world around them positively.
 - You are the salt of the earth...the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:13-16).
- Christians are called to influence the world, not to be influenced by it.
 - Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).
- Influence doesn't require flawlessness
 - David committed adultery but considered a man after God's own heart.
 - Peter denied Jesus three times yet became a pillar of the early church.
 - Paul persecuted Christians but became the most prolific apostle.
 - Jacob deceived Esau, Isaac and Laban, but became the patriarch of the 12 tribes.

Examples of Biblical Influencers

- Joseph in Egypt
 - Despite being sold into slavery, Joseph rose to a position of power in Egypt, where he used his influence to save many lives during a famine.
 - All the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere (Genesis 41:57).
- Esther in Persia
 - As queen, Esther's pivotal influence saved her people, proving how one person's response to God can change a nation's destiny.
- The early Church
 - The believers' communal life and devotion led to favor with all the people. Their influence was marked by unity, generosity, and a powerful witness to the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2:42-47).
- Paul's Missionary Journey
 - Paul exemplified the call to influence through his missionary work. His life shows how he established churches, mentored leaders, and engaged with diverse cultures, all while remaining steadfast in his commitment to the Gospel.

5 Biblical Principles for Influence

- 1 The Principle of Binary Impact
- 2 The Principle of Faithfulness in Small Things
- 3 The Principle of Available Resources
- 4 The Principle of Pre-Equipped Design
- 5 The Principle of Love as the Root

The Principle of Binary Impact

- The Binary Reality
 - There are only two ways to influence—good or bad; there is no neutral ground.
 - Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit (Matthew 7:17).
 - A tree is either bearing fruit (positive impact) or it is barren/producing wild grapes (negative/null impact).
- Influence only in two ways: Positive vs. Negative
- Positive Impact:
 - Jethro to Moses (Exodus 18);
 - Barnabas to Paul (Acts 9 & 11);
 - Naomi to Ruth; Mordecai to Esther;
- Negative Impact:
 - The 10 Spies to Israel (Numbers 13-14);
 - Jezebel to Ahab (1 Kings 21);
 - Satan to Eve; Eve to Adam;



The Principle of Faithfulness in Small Things

- The Law of the Shepherd's Field
 - Influence starts small and gradually expands its zone of impact.
 - David didn't start with a crown; He started with sheep, a sling, not a kingdom. Influence begins with faithfulness in the small field God has given you.
 - (Eliab to David): Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? (1 Samuel 17:28).
 - (David to Saul): Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it (1 Samuel 17:34-35).
 - Do not despise the day of small beginnings (Zechariah 4:10). Your current "small" assignment is the training ground for your "great" influence.
- Question:
 - What is one hidden or small task in your current life that requires your best effort this week?
 - My Action: _____

The Principle of Available Resources

- The Miracle of the Available
 - Identify resources, talents, opportunities God has already placed in your lives to serve Him.
 - (God to Moses) “What is that in your hand?” “A staff” he replied (Exodus 4:2).
 - Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head... “I cannot go in these,... so he took them off... Then he chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag and approached the Philistine (1 Samuel 17:38-40).
 - “We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered... All ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over (Matthew 14:17-20).
- What is your influence?
 - What is the ordinary thing in your hand right now that God wants to use for an extraordinary impact in someone else's life?
 - If you will take it and give it to Jesus, he will make it come alive. He will do things you would never imagine.

The Principle of Pre-Equipped Design

- God equipped the called, He doesn't call the equipped.
 - God chooses ordinary people to accomplish His purposes, regardless of their current skills, qualifications, or readiness.
 - I have chosen Bezalel... I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills (Exodus 31:2-3).
 - His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness (2 Peter 1:3).
 - Now may the God of peace...equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him (Hebrews 13:20-21).
- You Are "SHAPED" for influence
 - God has intentionally designed you for a specific purpose, often using S.H.A.P.E. (Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experience).
 - God equips you with a combination of the Holy Spirit, the Bible, past experiences, and community to fulfill your specific calling.
 - Your unique knowledge and experiences are the pre-installed tools God wants to use. But the focus is on being available and obedient to go where God calls, rather than feeling prepared or qualified.

The Principle of Love as the Root

- The most powerful and effective strategy for influencing others is love.
 - Without the Engine of love, influence is just noise. (1 Corinthians 13:1).
 - Influence + Love = Kingdom Building;
 - Influence – Love = Selfish Ambition;
- People are influenced primarily by love
 - Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:31).
 - For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).
- Love-based Influence Audit
 - Is my motive person-centered or task-centered?
 - Am I providing a safe harbor for failure?
 - Is my tone characterized by empathy or by judgement and criticism?
 - Am I willing to sacrifice my comfort or reputation to help this person?

In What Way Do I Influence Those Around Me?

- Proactively seek to positively influence others
 - Set examples for others in the way we live. Encourage others by the way you talk and behave.
 - Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).
- Start where I am
 - Give my best to even the smallest things God has entrusted to my care.
 - Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much (Luke 16:10).
- Use What's in my hand
 - God uses my current inventory (what is in my hand) rather than what I wish I had.
 - Stop waiting for better tools. Use my current skills and resources I already have when influencing others.
- I am already equipped
 - I am an influencer already because God has equipped me with specific skills and competencies; My job is to find and use them.
 - Do not complain or make excuses for what God has entrusted to me. When God asks something of me, the only possible answer is to obey.



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