Living as Salt & Light

Session #9 The Living Series

Influence & Evangelism

Living the saved life involves living with influence and sharing the good news of God's love with the people in our circle of influence.

How can our new lives in Christ have an influence on the people around us?

In this teaching, we are going to look at how our Christian conduct can be influential in our interactions with others.

How we carry ourselves in both our public and private lives will have an influence on those around us.

The Lord has throughout time placed His influencers in various cultures who had an influence in those cultures.

- ***Joseph in Egypt.***
- ***Esther in Persia.***
- ***Daniel in Babylon.***

Matthew 5:13-16 "**You are the salt of the earth**; but if **the salt loses its flavor**, how shall it be seasoned? It is then **good for nothing** but to be thrown out and **trampled underfoot by men**. "**You are the light of the world**. A city that is set on a hill cannot **be hidden**. Nor do they light a lamp and **put** it under a basket, but **on a lampstand**, and **it gives light to all who are in the house**. **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven**."

- ***The usefulness of salt.***
  - ***Enhances flavor***
  - ***A preservative***
  - ***Melts ice***
  - ***Soothes sores***
  - ***Kills weeds***
- ***The usefulness of light.***
  - ***Helps us to see***
  - ***Exposes darkness***
  - ***Brings warmth***
  - ***Creates color***
- ***If we lose our flavor, we lose our influence.***

- ***If we lose our influence, our Christianity is good for nothing.***
- ***If we are hiding our light, those in the dark will not be drawn to God.***

6 practical ways to influence others for Christ.

1. **Walk in love**

- **Ephesians 5:1-2** "Therefore **be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love**, **as Christ also has loved us** and **given Himself for us**, an offering and **a sacrifice to God** for a sweet-smelling aroma."
  - ***Our lives will have influence when we live to imitate God, and not the world.***
  - ***Our lives will have influence when we live as God's beloved children, and not as camouflage Christians. We must be different if we are going to make a difference.***
  - ***Our lives will have influence when we live with the sacrificial love that Christ loved us with. Sacrificial love is the greatest influence in the world.***
  - ***We are to live beyond self-focus and take active interest in the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of others around us.***

2. **Walk in the light**

- **Ephesians 5:8-11** "For you **were** once darkness, **but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light** (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And **have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them**."
  - ***Living in the light of God is at the center of the new life.***
  - ***Living in the light of God means that we will no longer live one with darkness but rather expose it for the darkness that it is.***
  - **John 3:19** "Men love darkness rather than light."
  - **John 7:7** "The world hates Me because I testify that its works are evil."
- **1 John 1:6-7** "**If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth**. But **if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another**, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."
  - ***Living in the light of God means that we will have a lifestyle of living His truth out.***
  - ***Living in the light of God means that we will do life with other believers who are living in the light of God.***
  - ***Do not have your light out, be a lighthouse for those around you.***

- ***Keep your light shining and God will guide people in the dark to you.***

3. **Walk carefully and in wisdom**

- **Ephesians 5:15-17** "See then that you **walk circumspectly**, not as fools but **as wise**, Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is."
  - ***God's will for our lives is that we live carefully and thoughtfully.***
  - ***When we live carefully and thoughtfully, our lives will have an influence on the people around us.***
- **Colossians 4:5-6** "**Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside**, redeeming the time. **Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt**, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."
  - ***When we live out God's wisdom in our lives towards the world, we will have an influence on the world.***
  - ***When we speak the wisdom of God with grace, we will influence people for God.***

4. **Walk in truth**

- **3 John 4** "I have no greater joy than to hear that **my children walk in truth**."
  - ***What is truth? God's word is truth. Jesus is the Truth.***
  - ***A life lived in the truth of God will have an influence on people who are tied of the world's lies and are searching for life-changing truth.***

5. **Live life as a spiritual first responder.**

- ***In an auto accident, the EMT will have more influence than the investigator.***
- ***As we live with Christ, there will be times when we will have the opportunity to come along someone who has fallen into sin.***
- **Malachi 2:6** "The law of truth was in his mouth, And injustice was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and equity, And **turned many away from iniquity**."
- **Daniel 12:3** "Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And **those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever**."
- **Galatians 6:1-2** "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, **you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness**, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."
- **James 5:19-20** "Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and **someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins**."

- **Proverbs 10:12** "Hatred stirs up strife, **But love covers all sins**."
  - ***When Noah was found drunk and uncovered by his sons, Shem and Japheth covered their father while Ham did not.***
  - ***This is not about sweeping sin under the rug or not holding people accountable, it is about not humiliating someone in their sin and being a part of their potential restoration.***

6. **Live to do good**

- **Galatians 6:9-10** "And **let us not grow weary while doing good**, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, **as we have opportunity, let us do good to all**, especially to those who are of the household of faith."
  - ***Living the life of an influencer for the Lord will indeed cause you to be physically tired from time to time.***
  - ***Living as an influencer for the Lord will indeed have seasons of discouragement when we don't see a return for our good works.***
  - ***God's influencers look for opportunities to do good works, especially the good works that will bless God's people.***
- **1 Peter 4:10** "As each one has received a gift, **minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God**."
  - ***God's influencers have first been influenced by God.***

Closing Exhortation:

- **Ephesians 2:8-10** "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For **we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared beforehand **that we should walk in them**."
  - ***We are saved to be God's workmanship that will live out good works and have an influence in His world.***

Helpful tips for evangelism:

- ***Begin loving the lost by praying for them and befriending them.***
- ***Be a good listener, and value the needs of others.***
- ***Helping people bear their burdens is a great evangelism tool.***
- ***Pray for boldness to speak the truth in love.***
- ***Be prepared to dialogue with the lost.***
- ***Know what you believe and where to find it in the Bible.***
- ***Ask questions because it gives you control of the conversation.***

- ***”Do you have a spiritual background?”***
- ***“Did you grow up going to Church?***
- ***“Do you go to Church anywhere?***
- ***“What is your understanding of who Jesus is?”***
- ***“Do you believe in life after death?”***
- ***“Where will you go when you die?”***

- ***Listen without becoming defensive.***
- ***Do not be in a hurry to correct them.***
- ***Do not interrupt them.***
- ***Do not enter into an argument. “Personal soul winners get more results with tears in their eyes than arguments on their lips.”***
- ***Do not come across as a divisive person.***
- ***Share what God has done for you and how He has influenced your life.***
- ***Every Christian occupies some kind of a pulpit and preaches some kind of a sermon every day.***