

Influence

What is influence?

In + fluere, *flow in*

- Celestial fluid that flows from stars affects humans
- Influenza (same origin): epidemic caused by planets

What is influence (for real)?

- Power or capacity to sway, cause an effect
- Corrupt interference with authorities for personal gain
- “Under the influence” – affected by alcohol or drugs
- Synonyms: affect, impact, move, sway, touch, weight, etc.

What is influence (for real)?

- Acts 25⁵ Therefore, he said, let those who have authority among you go down with me and accuse this man, to see if there is any fault in him (NKJV).
- Gal.2² I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain (ESV).

Influence can be good or bad

BAD influences

- 2 Sm.13:1-5, Amnon's friend, Jonadab
- 1 K.3; 11, wives
- Mk.6:19-27, worldly step-daughter

GOOD influences

- Est.4:...14, with world ruler
- 2 Co.10:13-16, area assigned by God
- 1 Tim.4¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity

All have influence

“A Christian may be a blot or a blessing;
a blank he cannot be”

- We are born with influence. Hb.11:23
- We remember people who helped us
 - Edified ... Encouraged ... Enlightened
- We remember people who harmed us
 - Discouraged... Disheartened ... Dismayed
- We do not lose our influence at death.
Hb.11:4. Jeroboam, 1 K.12; 13:34...

I. Mt.5:13-16, Character:
be what you are

Character – be what you are, 13

Description: salt of the earth.

- Gn.19, a few good men would save Sodom
- Prov.14³⁴ Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

Danger: loses flavor.

- Some keep their salvation a secret.
Ac.4¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

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Destiny to avoid: thrown out, trampled...

Description – light of the ... (14-15)

World: like sun, seen by all. 28:19. Ph.2:15.

City: seen by community. 1 Pt.2:11-12.

Tertullian: But it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. See, they say, how they [Christians] love one another, for they themselves [sinners] are animated by mutual hatred; see how they are ready even to die for one another, for they themselves will rather put to death.

House: lamp, seen by family. 1 Pt.3:1-2.

Danger – hide our light, 15

Bushel: measure for grain; hide light at work.
Jn.2.

Bed: Mk.4²¹ Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand?

Desire – purpose to pursue: glorify Father

Mt.6:1-5, 16

Ac.12²² And the people kept shouting, The voice of a god and not of a man! ²³ Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. ²⁴ But the word of God grew and multiplied.

I. Mt.5:13-16, Character

II. Mt.18:6-7, Concern:
my brother's keeper

Danger (6):

- Whoever causes ... to sin (ASV: stumble)
 - 8-9: some cause themselves to sin

Desire (6):

- Better for him... millstone
 - Crushed grain
 - What would be worse than this drowning?
(8-9)

Destiny (7):

- Woe!
 - Mt.23¹⁵ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.
 - Influence and example may do what Pharisees did by false doctrine.
 - Ex.23:31-33, avoid wrong influences...

I. Mt.5:13-16, Character

II. Mt.18:6-7, Concern...

III. Ro.2:17-24, Consistency:
practice what you preach

Romans 2:

17-18: wear the name (profession); know...

- Contrast practice: 3:10-19
- Bad lives contradict good doctrine

19-20: guide (superiority). Mt.15:14

21-22: preach one way, live another (hypocrisy)

23-24: dishonor God (blasphemy). Ac.5

Romans 2:

- David, 2 Sm.11; 12:14.

1 Tim.6¹ Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed

Hb.12¹⁴ without holiness no one will see the Lord

I. Mt.5:13-16, character

II. Mt.18:6-7, concern...

III. Ro.2:17-24, consistency...

IV. Gal.2:11-12, courage:
blind lead the blind

Two words

11 –

- Withstood: set oneself against, oppose
- Blamed: condemn, convict
 - Peter defended eating with Gentiles, Ac.11
 - Now Peter was intimidated
 - Believed gospel; failed to practice it
 - Paul did not hesitate to correct Peter (an apostle) or Barnabas (a friend)
 - 2 Pt.3:16
 - Even apostles sinned (1 Jn.1:8)

Two more words

13 –

- Played the hypocrite: join in pretense / hypocrisy. To play a part with (lit., answer from under. Used of actors. Acts 10
- Be led away together. Peter's courage failed; others followed. Dt.20:8

Public sin . . . Public exposure

14 –

- Peter's actions could have destroyed the church
- At stake: *truth of the gospel* (14, 5)
- If doctrine doesn't matter . . .

Lessons

1. Do not let others influence you to sin.
2. Do not influence others to sin, even by example.
3. Be humble enough to correct sins.
4. Public sins require public correction.

We are judged by four things

1. What we do.
2. How we look.
3. What we say.
4. How we say it.