

Irresistible **INFLUENCE**

THE POWER OF INFLUENCE

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GROUP ICE BREAKER

Who would you say is the most influential person alive today and why?

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will let go of resentment and start to forgive.
- I will make a call/meet with someone to extend forgiveness.
- I will learn to rejoice with people who rejoice.
- I will confess the judgmental spirit in my heart toward others.
- I will reflect the heart of the father in this story.

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Influence is the ability to have an effect on the behavior of another. Spiritual influence is different, because it's primarily the work of the Holy Spirit. It happens when you're so Christ-centered, that other people see it and realize they want that for their own life.

As the book of Titus opens, Paul is concerned for the church in Crete. They lack the spiritual influence of effective elders. Elders guard a church from drifting off mission, its commitment to theological truth, and they help make sure the right people are serving in the right places. What are the marks of spiritual influence that make someone a potential elder?

A blameless life. Paul is saying that elders need to have a public reputation that's not marked by scandal or a lack of integrity.

Personal and family life. Paul is concerned about ethical and character issues. Authentic spiritual influence begins at home, on people who see you the most and know you best.

Integrity of character. Paul runs through five negative categories that have the capacity to destroy spiritual influence; arrogance, quick-tempered, addictive patterns, power issues, and dishonesty with money.

He then lists positive qualities that build influence; being immersed in Scripture, a heart that is gripped by love for people, and mind to encourage others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you define influence?
2. Who has been a spiritually influential person in your life? What made them influential?
3. Read Titus 1:5-9. Paul speaks of elders, or leaders within a church, and the marks of spiritual influence in their lives. What is your reaction to the list of criteria here?
4. Paul is concerned about ethical and character issues in those who lead, and elders, if married, should be models of faithfulness, integrity, loyalty and truth-telling in a marriage. How would you explain the value of these characteristics to someone not following Christ?
5. Matt challenged us to do a character check, and rate yourself in five areas as either 1-growing, 2-neutral, or 3-backwards movement. How do you rate yourself in these areas:
 - Arrogance
 - Quick-tempered
 - Addictive patterns
 - Power issues
 - Dishonesty with money
6. One of the significant contributors to spiritual immaturity is a lack of Biblical literacy. What role does Bible reading play in your spiritual growth? Would you describe your Bible reading habits as regular, irregular, or rare?
7. What is one doable next step that could help you leave positive spiritual fingerprints on the people you're closest to?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

Use these as a guide to take your next step and commit to what you learned this week:

- I will seek to live a blameless life.
- I will honor God in my relationships.
- I will take steps toward leaving a positive spiritual influence on my family.
- I will do a regular character check, evaluating my spiritual influence.
- I will immerse myself in Scripture in order to benefit people around me.
- I will be a source of encouragement to those around me.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Titus 1:1-10
- Titus 3:10-11

PRAYER REQUESTS

Take time to share how you can be praying for each other over the next week:

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