

## THE POWER OF INFLUENCE

-Ryan Parsons-

### **Matthew 5:14-16**

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

What does Jesus mean? He is NOT talking about your personal or political powers of influence. He is not talking about Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People* or Robert Cialdini's work, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. What Jesus is talking about is your Kingdom influence. When you spend time with Jesus (Acts 4:13), when you are walking in the light (Eph. 5:8), when his Spirit is in you (Eph. 5:18), when you are proclaiming his Word (2 Tim. 4:2) and producing His fruit (Gal. 5:16-26), people notice. This is Kingdom influence.

A friend once wrote a booklet entitled *Sarah May Be Listening*. More than two decades ago, it was very impactful upon me as a new Christian. In it, the author points out some hard truths about influence.

*The thought of one's actions "causing" or promoting someone to do something senseless or harmful is a repulsive one. We would rather think that anything we do has nothing to do with anyone else. But your not liking the idea of being an influence does not remove the fact. The truth is that even your refusal to try to make a contribution leaves an impression on those who see your attitude. Those who look up to you, who seek your council and wisdom, deserve your attention. Someone, probably many someones, gave you the attention, advice and example that brought you to the place you are today. Plus there are more than likely special people you look to now, who influence your continued growth process. Who was (or is) that for you? - Ralph Byant*

But it doesn't stop there. We are called to be Christ-like. In so doing, we become a Kingdom influence to the world around us. As we become that salt and light, we invite others to see Jesus and imitate him.

### **1 Corinthians 11**

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

Who are you influencing for the Kingdom? Let your light shine!

Ryan