

BE AN INFLUENCER FOR GOD

Just as God has entrusted to us treasure, talents, time, and the truth, He has also entrusted to us influence. God has placed us exactly where we are to be an influencer for Him. Jesus tells us in Matthew 5:13-16 how we are to be an influence in this world: We are to be the salt of the earth (v.13) and the light of the world (v. 14).

YOU ARE LIGHT OF THE WORLD (Matthew 5:14-16)

Because the world is in darkness, our purpose is to shine the light of Christ in it. Jesus tells us in John 8:12 that He is the Light of the world. As we follow Him and obey His word, He will be the light of our life. We are empowered and given wisdom on what to do or say in every situation so that we lead others closer to Him and glorify His name.

There was a time in the history of Israel when a plot was planned to annihilate them as a nation. God has placed Esther as queen during that time (Esther 4:14-16). She was confronted with a decision to be a light, requiring much courage. Esther requested that prayer and fasting be done. Those prayers gave Esther the strength to make that decision to be a light to her people and their nation was spared. God delivered Israel through Queen Esther's intervention to avert disaster for the Jews. When we act like as light, we point people to Christ, our Great Deliverer.

YOU ARE SALT OF THE EARTH (Matthew 5:13)

Salt impacts anything that it comes in contact with – it flavors, preserves, and purifies. In the same way, when we live as salt of the earth, we impact the lives of people who are close to us. They experience the joy, peace, faith, and the power of the Holy Spirit in our life. When we are full of grace, truth, and humility, it attracts people to

this week's memory verse

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 PETER 1:3

Jesus. Just as salt makes people thirsty, our “saltiness” makes people thirsty for the Lord. God has given us influence to exercise it for His purpose. The Bible tells us our speech should always be gracious, seasoned with salt (Colossians 4:6). To know what, how and when to say something is a “God thing”. We need to be in prayer and constantly be filled by the Holy Spirit. However, while salt is an amazing compound, impurities can make it tasteless and useless. We are cautioned not to let any impurities or sins enter our life. Otherwise, we will be ineffective in influencing people for Christ.

RECOGNIZE YOUR INFLUENCE

Who are the people that we are to influence? We all have circles of influence — people that God has placed in our lives to influence for Him. Let us prayerfully and intentionally influence them for the Lord in word and deed as we depend on the Holy Spirit to empower us:

- **Inner circle:** This would be our family, our closest friends, and our spiritual family.
- **Intermediate circle:** This would be the people that we work with, people we transact with, our classmates, and those we have common interests with.
- **Outer circle:** This is made up of acquaintances or social media friends.

EXERCISE YOUR INFLUENCE

How can we influence people for the Lord? Here are some practical ways we can start doing to point people in our circles of influence to Jesus:

- Pray.
- Rely on the Holy Spirit.
- Enter their world.
- Model authentic Christlikeness.
- Continue to journey with them.
- Do not rush.

We do not have it within ourselves to be salt and light no matter how good we are. But Jesus entered our world and paid the penalty of our sins, so that He could be in the center of our lives if we allow Him (John 3:16). When we submit and surrender to Him, Jesus Himself — in and through us — will enable us to point others to Him to be the Savior of their lives!

discussion questions

Do you recognize your spheres of influence? Who are the people in your inner, intermediate, and outer circles?

How are you influencing them? Are you pointing them towards Christ or the world?

What do you need to do differently as a result of this Sunday’s message? How will you apply it in your life this week?

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