

## Trait # 7 SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE

### OUR TWO BIGGEST PROBLEMS:

John 14:6

- 1 Sending the **wrong message**.
- 2 A lack of **urgency**.

### SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE FLOWS OUT OF. . .

1 Peter 2:11-12/ Matthew 5:13-16 & 9:35/ 1 Peter 3:15-16

- 1 A good **LIFE**.
- 2 Good **DEEDS**.
- 3 Good **ANSWERS**.

### SIX THINGS WE DON'T WANT TO FORGET:

- 1 There are no **magic bullets**.  
Mark 6:4-6/ 2 Corinthians 4:3-4
- 2 It's impossible to have **impact** without **contact**.  
Matthew 9:10-13/ 1 Corinthians 5:9-13/ Daniel & Joseph
- 3 The test of influence is **influence!**  
Luke 7:30-35/ Matthew 28:19-20
- 4 "Come and see" is usually more effective than "**shut up and listen!**"  
John 1:45-50/ John 4:28-29 & 39-42
- 5 No one can argue with **our story**.  
John 4:39-42/ John 9:25/ 1 Peter 3:15-16
- 6 God wants His enemies **won over** not **wiped out**.  
Ezekiel 18:23 & 33:11/ John 3:16/ 2 Timothy 2:24-26

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 23, 2005

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## QUICK REVIEW

1. This week we focused on the importance of having genuine spiritual influence on the people and world we interact with. What did you find most helpful, challenging or interesting from this week's message?

## MY STORY

1. When you think of the words "evangelism" or "evangelist," what positive and negative words, images or stories come to mind?

2. The story of your own spiritual journey is one of the most powerful tools you have to share your faith. Knowing that we are all at different points on that journey, how would you describe your relationship with Jesus today?

If someone were to ask you, "What has God done for you?" or "What difference has being a follower of Jesus made in your life?", what would you say?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. 1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 gives us a great picture of what a spiritually influential relationship can look like. Read the passage and answer the following questions.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:1-13

You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. [2] We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. [3] For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. [4] On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. [5] You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed--God is our witness. [6] We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.

As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, [7] but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. [8] We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. [9] Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

[10] You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. [11] For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, [12] encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

[13] And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. [NIV]

What do you think he meant by *sharing the Gospel*?

What do you think he meant by *sharing his life*?

Why does it work best to share the Gospel **and** your life?

List a few of the character qualities that Paul modeled as a spiritually influential person.

2. Pastor Larry pointed out that having spiritual influence with those around us is something we are all required to do. Yet there are many ways we can have that influence. Read the passages below and then match the passage with the style (or method) of spiritual influence that fits the passage best. Draw lines to connect each style with the appropriate verses.

John 4:27-30; 39-41      *A Relational Style - "Let's get together"*

Acts 17:16-21; 32-34      *A Serving Style - "Let me show you"*

Luke 5:27-32      *An Invitational Style - "Come with me"*

Acts 2:29-41      *A Testimony Style - "Look what God did"*

Acts 9:36-43      *An Intellectual Style - "Give me answers"*

#### **John 4:27-30**

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

[28] Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, [29] "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" [30] They came out of the town and made their way toward him. [NIV]

#### **John 4:39-41**

Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." [40] So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. [41] And because of his words many more became believers. [NIV]

#### **Acts 17:16-21**

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. [17] So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. [18] A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. [19] Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? [20] You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean." [21] (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.) [NIV]

#### **Acts 17:32-34**

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." [33] At that, Paul left the Council. [34] A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others. [NIV]

### **Luke 5:27-32**

After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, [28] and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

[29] Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. [30] But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

[31] Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. [32] I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." [NIV]

### **Acts 2:29-41**

"Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. [30] But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. [31] Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. [32] God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. [33] Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. [34] For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

" 'The Lord said to my Lord:

"Sit at my right hand

[35] until I make your enemies  
a footstool for your feet." ' "

[36] "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

[37] When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

[38] Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39] The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call."

[40] With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." [41] Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. [NIV]

### **Acts 9:36-43**

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. [37] About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. [38] Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

[39] Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

[40] Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. [41] He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. [42] This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. [43] Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon. [NIV]

God expects us to use the unique personality and gift mix that He gave us to influence others. Which of these styles of spiritual influence best fit who you are?

What are some of the dangers of thinking there is only one way to influence others?

3. A person of spiritual influence needs the ability to tune into the needs of others. How did Jesus respond to people with real needs in Matthew 9:35-38?

**Matthew 9:35-38**

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. [36] When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. [37] Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. [38] Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." [NIV]

What might it look like for us to respond like Jesus did?

**TAKING IT HOME**

1. Looking back on the sermon and these study questions, is there any area in your life where you could grow or change, or something you can continue, in order to make you a more spiritually influential person?

2. If you could impact the spiritual life of anyone in your current circle of relationships and influence, who would you most like to see take a step closer to Jesus?

What could you do or say that might help that happen?

Spend some time praying for these specific people and God's work in their life.