

## NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

In the last part of the 1660's in England John Donne wrote:

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontor were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never to send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

### NO MAN IS AN ISLAND - WE ARE ALL PART OF A WHOLE

1. We Are Part of A Family - This Includes Our Ancestry.
2. We Are Part Of A Church Family:

This involves God-Christ-Holy Spirit - a large family which is world-wide and made up of diverse races.

3. We Are Part Of The United States and Our World

### I AM INVOLVED IN MANKIND

1. This Involvement Is Service to God and Others
2. This Involvement Is Helping Others Get To Heaven.

Specifically, Our Children, Our Grandchildren, Our Parents

Close Relatives      Dear Friends

## THE POWER OF INFLUENCE

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Romans 14:7-12: "For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's ... So then each of us shall give account of himself to God."

2. Hosea 4:1-9: The Priests Were Guilty In Influencing Israel To Sin.

"Hear the word of the Lord, you children of Israel: for the Lord brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: there is no truth or mercy, or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint, with bloodshed after bloodshed. ... And it shall be: like people, like priest. So I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their deeds."

3. Joshua 14:8: The Ten Spies Influenced Israel to Turn Away From Canaan. "Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God."

4. Numbers 13:26; 14:5: "So they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land."

"Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel."

5. Proverbs 22:1: "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches."

6. 1 Peter 3:1: "Likewise you wives, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives."

### **I. WE ARE INFLUENCED - SOMETIMES IMPERCEPTIBLY - BY OUR ASSOCIATES.**

A. We Need to be Careful in Picking the Ones to Run With in Life.

1 Peter 4:3-4: Peter says that we are not to run with the Old Crowd after we choose the Christian Life.

"For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and

abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you."

B. We Deceive Ourselves If We Think We Are Not Influenced.

1 Cor. 15:33: "Be not deceived: evil <sup>COMPANIONS</sup> communications corrupt good manners." (KJV)

"Make no mistake - bad companions corrupt good morals."  
(Barclay)

C. Faint-Hearted Church Members Can Cause Other Christians to be Chicken-Hearted.

Deut. 20:8: "Then the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, 'What man is there who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart.'"

D. The Power of Influence Can Be Seen in Three Metaphors:

Light of the World - Salt of the Earth - Leaven

"Do a deed of simple kindness;  
Though its end you may not see,  
It may reach, like widening ripples,  
Down a long eternity."

Joseph Norris.

E. Proverbs 22:24-25: "Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go; lest you learn his ways, and set a snare for your soul."

II. THE CHURCH IS AFFECTING ITS COMMUNITY EITHER POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY.

A. The Preacher Is Commanded: "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. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." (1 Tim. 4:12-13)

B. The Elders Are Commanded: "Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint but willingly; not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock..." (1 Peter 5:2-3)

- C. Housewives Are Told: "Manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully."  
(1 Tim. 5-14)
- D. Teachers Of Others Are Told: "And a servant of the lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will." (2 Tim. 2:24-26)
- E. We Must Practice What We Preach: {Acts 1:1; Rom. 2:21; Matt. 5:19; Ps. 1:1; Matt. 23:13}

Q "We must prove the "profession" that we are Christians by our performance. It is not what we eat, but what we digest that makes us strong. And it is not what we say, but what we live that makes us genuine Christians. The world soon loses respect for a hypocritical, "in-name-only" church member. Such an individual is a stumbling block. And you can't build churches out of stumbling blocks. If you want a neighbor to see what Christ can do for him, let him see what Christ has done for you.

1. This Involves:

(a) Being Friendly.

- (i) Prov. 18:24: "A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."

(b) Refrain from Neighborhood Gossip.

- (i) 1 Tim. 5:13: "And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not."  
(ii) Ps. 15:3: "He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend."

(c) Keep Children Under Control.

- (i) Eph. 6:4: "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

- (ii) Prov. 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”
- (d) Maintain Domestic Tranquility.
- (i) 1 Tim. 2:2: “For kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”
  - (ii) Prov. 17:1: “Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife.”
    - (a) Feuding, fussing, and fighting never influenced another home for good.
- (e) Willing To Go The Second Mile.
- (i) Matt. 5:38-48: “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”
  - (ii) Rom. 12:19-21: “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for

it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

(f) Watching Our Speech.

- (i) Tit. 2:8: "Sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you."
- (ii) Eph. 4:29: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers."

(g) Watching Our Dress.

- (i) 1 Tim. 2:9-10: "In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works."

(h) Watching Our Tempers.

- (i) James 1:19: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."
- (ii) Eph. 4:26: "Be angry, and do not sin, do not let the sun go down on your wrath."

(i) Watching Our Habits.

"So when a great man dies,  
For years beyond our ken,  
The light he leaves behind him lies  
Upon the paths of men.

- Henry W. Longfellow

The Philippians Were Told:

"In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." (Phil. 2:15)

III. INFLUENCE CONTINUES LONG AFTER WE ARE DEAD:

- A. Heb. 11:4 - "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

1. 

Death stills man's tongue but <u>influence gives him another one that speaks forever.</u>
---

I am my neighbor's Bible,  
He reads me when we meet;  
Today he reads me in my home,  
Tomorrow in the street.

He may a relative or friend,  
Or slight acquaintance be,  
He may not even know my name,  
Yet he is reading me.

Dear Christian friends and brothers,  
If we could only know,  
How faithfully the world records,  
Just what we say and do.

Oh, we could make our record plain,  
And labor hard to see,  
Our worldly neighbors won to Christ,  
While reading you and me.

- B. Our Master Left Us An Example To Follow:

1. 1 Peter 2:21: "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps."