

## **Influence - We've All Got It!**

**There are two kinds of influence (Matt. 7:15-20).**

(1) There is bad influence. Solomon's wives (I Kings 11:1-13), Ahaz (II Chron. 28:33), the Pharisees (Matt 23:13), and Jezebel of Thyatira (Rev. 2:20) all exerted a bad influence.

(2) There is good influence. Esther (Esther 4:14), Paul in Caesar's household (Phil. 4:22; Acts 28:30, 31), the jailor in his household (Acts 16:25-34), all exerted good influence.

**Every person has influence.**

(1) We are born with influence. A little baby changes the whole household, with trips being postponed, meals being rescheduled, and sleeping hours adjusted. The birth of Moses influenced his parents, his sister, Pharaoh's daughter, and Pharaoh. The birth of Christ influenced His parents, the shepherds, the wise men, the innkeeper; yea, the king on his throne.

(2) We cannot lose our influence. We may lose our good influence, but we still have influence--bad influence! Once, in the Bureau of Standards in Washington, a tiny tube containing less than two-thousandths of an ounce of radium was accidentally dropped on a hardwood floor and broken. With a camel's hair brush, they swept up the radium. Then they washed the floor to get the rest of it, but enough remained to render another washing necessary. Then, it was cleansed another time with acidulated water. Each washing yielded about four hundred dollars worth of radium. Finally, a carpenter came and scraped the floor. Three years later, the shavings were burned and the ashes were found to be strong in radium. In like manner, it is almost impossible to get rid of human influence, whether for good or bad.

(3) They do not put our influence in the coffin with us; it lives on and on and on (Rev. 14:13; Heb.11:4; Matt. 26:6-13).

An evil man, when dying, cried, "Gather up my influence, and bury it with me." But, of course, whether our influence has been good or bad, such is not possible. The "sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat" continued to be felt long after his death (I Kings 15:34; 16:31, etc.). Omni had been dead 200 years and Ahab 170 years, but Israel was still being influenced thereby (Micah 6:16).

**Every step of the way, we are exerting influence upon those with whom we come in contact.**

(1) Paul said it this way: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" (Rom. 14: 7). You may think you have no influence, but you cannot go through life without influencing others. God's word says none of us liveth to himself. You and I do that every day. Few things work so quietly, yet so effectively, as influential power. Let's make sure our influence on others is good.

-- For the elders (Gregg Woodall)