



March 31, 2019
Credible Character

The character quality of our lives must increasingly become like the One we give witness to. We must be Good News as we share the Good News. Our life is the medium of the message. Read Matthew 5:13. The effectiveness of salt is conditional - if it loses its saltiness, it's ineffective. If we are to have influence for Christ, we must grow in the qualities of Christ. Read Matthew 5:14-15. Like salt, the effectiveness of light is conditional. Light can be hidden; concealed by fear, eclipsed by worldliness, dim because it is not connected to the Spirit's power. Encourage one another with stories of where in your life your light has shined. Conversely, have there been times where you have struggled to shine?

On Sunday, Gerry described a number of ways we can back away from influence: being uncomfortable (nervous, fearful, seems like an imposition), unconcerned (too much worry about our own lives), uncommitted (uncommitted to Jesus and His commission), unconnected (no friendships with people who don't know Jesus), or unclear (don't know where to start, what to do) What your "un"? What is the predominant reason you pull back? Pray for each other.

Read Acts 1:8. The Holy Spirit empowers us to BE Jesus' witnesses. He fills us with God's love for people (Romans 5:5). He convicts us of our apathy (John 16:8). He guides us, prompts us, speaks to us. He teaches us and reminds of Jesus' words (John 14:26). He gives us courage to overcome fear (2 Timothy 1:7). He transforms our character, affections and thoughts to be like Jesus. How are you keeping in step with the Spirit? In what area would you ask the Spirit to increase your influence?



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As the Holy Spirit transforms us, we reflect Jesus more. Your life is the evidence that gives credibility to your witness and depth to your influence. As the qualities of Jesus emerge, the gap closes between who we really are and who we are destined to become. It creates the necessary trust for people if they want to ask us about the hope we have. This is especially powerful as we are being transformed as a community. Our united influence is greater than our individual influence alone. There are many qualities of united influence:

- authentic faith
- sacrificial love
- courageous hope
- faithful prayer
- joyful giver
- verbal witness
- peaceful forgiver

What are your strengths? Celebrate together. What quality would you like to see God continue to grow you in? Pray for one another to grow in these qualities so that we have greater united influence.

As Christ followers become visibly counter cultural, cheerfully living a radical new way of being human, sacrificially loving others and courageously putting the world right, then talking about Jesus will have increased effectiveness (N.T. Wright). We must intentionally cultivate a deeper relationship with God by receiving the unconditional love of the Father, living in vital union with Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit and walking in His power. We must arrange our lives around growing in faith, loving in community and serving in mission. In what ways are you intentionally arranging your life to enter into a life of spiritual training?