

Destined to Impact

Have you ever dreamt of making a real difference - of truly impacting on your present condition and on those around you? Have you ever desired to be influential and to leave a great legacy for generations to come? Have you ever thought what people might say or write about you when you've gone home to be with the Lord? The truth is, whether you've thought this way or not God has a predestined plan and purpose for your life that involves you making a significant difference. Romans 8:29 says, ***“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son....”*** To be conformed means to take on the same form and the same likeness.

Jesus Christ was the most influential person that ever lived. He impacted and made a significant difference wherever He went. In fact, Jesus has impacted on mankind more than anyone else in history. And what's so astounding is this; He's still making an enormous impact today! Yet, when God drew up a blueprint of Christ's life on earth, He also had you and me in mind. God included us in His family plan and predestined us to take on the very same form as His Son Jesus. I believe this included the **authority** that Jesus displayed and the difference that He was able to make in that society. The Body of Christ should be as significant and influential as Jesus was, and it should be impacting with greater effect!

So what exactly should you be doing in order to make a difference? To answer this question I would like to look at the negative first by examining the obstacles. What hinders you from becoming influential? I have found seven basic obstacles that can rob you of your God given ability to make a positive impact. But remember this, an influential life is not an accident!

(1) **An unteachable attitude.** An unteachable spirit is an unwillingness to change. It is a stubborn spirit that refuses to process new information as it becomes available. The most influential people are those who are prepared to adopt fresh ideas, and then adapt to new procedures. Making a difference means keeping up with change! Proverbs 1:5 says, ***“I wise man will hear and will increase in learning.”*** Don't bankrupt your mind! Dare to accept change. Dare to listen to new ideas and concepts. Don't become satisfied with the knowledge you have! Remember this, intolerance of the present creates a better future.

(2) **Broken promises.** Ecclesiastes 5:4,5 states, ***“When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it back; for He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed - better not vow than to vow and not to pay,”*** God holds you responsible for what you promise. Hence, you can never make an impact if you can't keep your word! So what have you promised God (or those around you), and what have you promised yourself? Take responsibility for your own words and God will honour it. Remember this, your word is deciding your future.

(3) **Unforgiven offences.** Mark 11:26 declares, ***“If you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your offences.”*** Forgiving is releasing to God the right to make judgement and schedule punishment. He alone has this right. Therefore, unforgiveness is 'playing god'. And it denies God the opportunity to exercise grace and mercy. Remember this, forgiveness is not a suggestion but a requirement.

(4) **Bad associations.** You will never be influential if you hang out with the wrong crowd. Solomon said, ***“He that walks with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed”*** [Proverbs 13:20]. Unwise friendships and associations have destroyed the potential and the abilities of innumerable ‘would-be’ leaders. And it has nullified the positive influence of so many Christians. Remember this, whoever cannot increase you, will eventually decrease you.

(5) **Loose words.** Proverbs 18:21 says, ***“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they that love it shall eat it’s fruit.”*** This I respect, you are what you eat! Your words are powerful, they are a creative force. Words are tools that God gave you to build up your spirit and develop your mind. But they are also signposts to others, pointing in the direction your life is moving. You impact on people with your words - in the positive or the negative. What’s more, your words frame your destiny. Remember this, today is the tomorrow you talked about yesterday.

(6) **Undeveloped or undiscovered gifts.** The easiest and most effective way of being influential is to operate in your gifts and calling. All of you have different and unique gifts and abilities. Romans 12:6 confirms this, ***“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given us....”*** But God also intends that you make full use of them. Remember the parable of the talents? The servant who made the biggest difference was the one who made “full use” of what the Lord had given him! Remember this, people of influence never magnify their weak points.

(7) **Indifference.** Indifference robs you of potential. James 1:8 says, ***“A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.”*** A committed heart is a decided heart. It is the result of a ‘made-up’ mind. And this can explain the mystery of the ‘charisma’ or ‘presence’ that many powerful people generate when they walk into a room. Remember this, passion and enthusiasm will always attract the right people.

Throughout the centuries there were men and women who took first steps, down new roads, armed with nothing but their own vision. You're the only one who can make the difference. So, whatever your dream is, go for it! Never be afraid to do something new. Amateurs built the ark; professionals built the titanic.

You were put on earth to make a contribution - to impact. You weren't created just to consume resources -- to eat, breathe and take up space. God designed you to make a significant difference - wherever you go. This is one of God's purposes for your life, and it's referred to as your “calling”. You have been “called” (pre-destined) to make an **impact**. Nothing can stop this happening except you! Everyday you should be making an impact for God - in where you go, how you act and what you say. There is a saying going around, "If you were put on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?"

If you really want to make a difference for God, you have to be fully committed to Him. Everywhere Jesus went He made a difference for God because He was committed to His Father and He cared about others. He was always seeking to do the will of the Father. This is our mandate as well.

What are you doing to make a difference for God? Are you encouraging those close to you? How have you treated those around you and in your neighbourhood? Are people glad they know you? Each of us has the ability to make a difference around us. Even a bedridden person can call someone and encourage and pray

with them when needed. Are you making a difference for God in your sphere of influence? If everyone made a difference wherever they went, think what a different world this would be. But it has to start with you and me caring about what is happening around us and using God's power and wisdom to make a difference for Him each day that we live. How will you make an impact for God today? Remember, you are destined to impact.