

What About Your Example And Influence?

Rom. 14:7

Introduction:

- A. Example moves the world more than doctrine. The great exemplars are the poets of action, and it makes little difference whether they be forces for good or forces for evil (Henry Miller [1891-1980] American author).
- B. As we notice from Mr. Miller's quote, there are two different types of examples and influence: GOOD and EVIL. Every person falls into one of the two categories. We are either setting forth a GOOD or an EVIL example. We are an influence for GOOD or for EVIL. We cannot be both.

I. The Power Of Example And Influence

- A. Great battles and even whole wars have been either won or lost on the examples and influences of the official leadership.
 - 1. Many battles have been won and the enemy routed by the heroic behavior of the officers in charge. Such as Stonewall Jackson during the Civil War.
 - a. Such had been accomplished by the general leading the whole army and by the sergeant leading a squad of men.
 - 2. On the other hand, battles have been lost by the cowardice and bad examples of leadership.
 - a. Some have even collaborated with the enemy in the time of war.
- B. We are soldiers in the army of the Lord.
 - 1. Our warfare is pitted against a constant enemy, Satan - Matt 13:39; 1 Pet 5:8
 - 2. Souls can be won from his clutches or lost to his sinful bondage.
 - a. Such is brought about many times by the example and influence of our leaders; the elders of a congregation. Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:3
 - b. Such can also be brought about by the preacher, the Bible class teacher and by others of the leadership. 1 Tim. 4:12; Jas. 3:1

- c. But much of the time such is brought about by the soldier in the ranks of the Lord's army - Jas. 1:26-27
- C. Those that are regular attenders of a congregation, even though they are not members, wield a great influence also.
 - 1. Those that have been brought up by parents that are members of the church, and that have attended the church all their lives, certainly stand to be an influence and example to others.
 - 2. In such a case, where such a person is well past the age of accountability and still has not rendered obedience to the gospel, such a person becomes a great deterrent to others many times.
 - a. Such a one as this, "knows to do right, but doeth it not" so to him it becomes sin - Jas. 4:17
 - 3. Such ones as this many times, because they are not yet members of the church, conduct themselves in such way as to be a bad influence on others; especially on those who think that they are members of the church.
 - a. Such conduct as that found in ones speech, and habits, etc.

II. *The Paradox Of The Power Of Weakness*

- A. The recognition of our own weaknesses, can be a powerful help in placing our lives and dependence into the hands of the Lord - 2 Cor. 12:9
 - 1. When one thinks he is very strong and that he has no worry about falling, then he needs to worry - 1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 6:1
- B. On the other hand, a person that considers himself a member of the church in good standing with the Lord, yet only attends the services once a week, that person, even though actually he is weak, is a powerful influence on others.
 - 1. Such a one influences others that there is no real need to attend more than one service a week.
 - 2. Such a one usually will not worry too much about attending even that one service if something comes up that he desires to do at that time.

3. Truly, such a member as this, even though he is actually weak, is projecting a powerful influence on others to follow his or her example.
- C. Then, there are those members that exude in their lives strength in many ways. They attend every service, take part in the services, attend all the business meetings, etc.
1. But, such a one might influence others by leaving the services right after the Lord's Supper even though no real emergency is indicated that would cause him to leave.
 2. Even this, f, becomes a powerful example to young Christians to do likewise.

Conclusion:

- A. Brother or Sister, what type of example or influence are you?
- B. Are you helping to win or to lose the battle with Satan?