1 - **INFLUENCERS AND FOLLOWERS**

Matthew 5:13-16

2 - **Who & What Are you Following?**

* **Rather, who & what is influencing you?**
* Social media offers to each of us opportunities to “follow” other people, causes and movements and thus opportunities to be influenced.
* Both God and Satan seek to influence for good and evil and are concerned about who we follow.

3 - **Who are you following?**

* **Who’s influencing you? We must choose!**
* **Between the world and God**. (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15; Josh. 24:15)
* **Both to eliminate and include**. (Numbers 33:55; Deut. 7:4 vs. Philippians 3:17-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:14)
* **Who’s on your “board of directors”?** (1 Kings 12)

4 - **Who are you following?**

* **Will we choose to follow the Lord fully**? (Matthew 16:24-25; Luke 9:57-62)
* **Anything or anyone diverting our attention**? (Matt. 14:30; Hebrews 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 7:35)
* **We’re either actively following or we are opposing**! (Matthew 12:30; cf., Philippians 3:18)

5 - **Who are you following?**

* **What are we exposing our hearts and minds to?**
* Be careful! (Proverbs 4:23; Mark 4:24; Romans 13:13-14)
* Will we follow the “*masses*”? (Exodus 23:2; Matthew 7:13-14)
* *“****Do not be deceived****…”* (1 Corinthians 15:33; Heb. 2:1)
* **We need to get real**! (Jeremiah 17:9; James 1:23-25)

6 - **Who’s following your example?**

* **We’re all examples in one form or another…**
* For good (Matthew 5:13-16; 1 Timothy 4:12) or bad (Galatians 2:11-13)…
* Do you encourage or discourage greater faithfulness? (1 Thessalonians 4:1)
* We’re either making it easier or harder for others to make it to the promised land. (Numbers 13:25ff; Revelation 2:4; 3:17)

7 - **How do we influence?**

* **Through our…**
* **Conduct -** our very presence, or lack thereof. (1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Peter 2:11-12; Eph. 5:15-16)
* **Speech -** including sharing the gospel (2 Kings 7:9; 2 Timothy 2:2)
* **Endurance/persistence -** (James 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 4:5)

8 - **Who’s following your example?**

* **Where our example matters:**
* **At home** (1 Peter 3:1-7; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15)
* **At work** (Colossians 3:22-24; Eph. 6:5-9; 1 Peter 2:18-20)
* **In society** (Romans 13:1ff; 1 Peter 2:11-17; Matt. 5:13-16)
* **In the church** (1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7; 1 Peter 5:3

**What kind of example are you providing?**

9 - **Your Influence Is Needed!**

* “*Now Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, ‘****Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my border****, and that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep me from harm that it may not pain me!’ And God granted him what he requested*.”
(1 Chronicles 4:10)

10 - **How long does influence last?**

Possibly forever… (Matthew 18:6-9; James 5:19-20;
2 Timothy 2:2)

We can’t undo past influences, but we can:

* Be forgiven (Acts 2:38; 8:22; Ephesians 1:7)
* Resolve to be an influence for good going forward. (Philippians 3:13-14)