

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Timothy 4:11-16**.
- B. From Roy H. Enoch (3-13-94).
- C. In 4:12, the aged apostle sets forth a complete plan for the life of the young preacher.
- D. Paul describes Timothy's influence by example in 5 areas: speech, life, love, faith, and purity.
 1. It is difficult to estimate the power of example.
 - a. People imitate those whom they admire.
 - b. Children first imitate those who care for them: their parents, or baby-sitter, or those who show them attention and affection.
 - c. It is natural to imitate those who show that they really care about a person.
 - d. Those that lead, or are in positions of authority or the public eye are often imitated.
 2. We are responsible for those who follow our example.
 3. We must be careful to lead where we want others to go.
 4. The word *influence* is from two Latin words *In* and *Fluo*, "to flow in" as our example flows into the lives of others.

I. EACH OF US IS AN INFLUENTIAL PERSON.

- A. When we think of people of influence, we usually think of one in high political office, or at the head of a company or one with great wealth. These do have influence, but often are not the focus of the average person.
- B. The power of influence can be illustrated by a candle.
 1. In the light of the sun, it can barely be seen, but we do not light candles for sunlight, but for darkness where it is the focus of attention.
 2. A Xian might seem insignificant in the presence of X, but in the word of greed and selfishness, his genuine love and concern for others, and his pure life is a flaming torch in the darkness.
- C. Some do not want to be people of influence.
 1. They hide their candle under a bushel.
 2. They avoid talking about religion/morals.
 3. Sometimes their language is worldly.
 4. They are not lights to the world.
- D. We should never underestimate our influence.
 1. Many times people know what they should do, but they won't.
 2. They may be moved more by a godly example of one of whom little is expected, that much by great people in public eye.
 3. Peter urged Xian wives that their example be a stronger influence than teaching (1Pet. 3:1-2).
- E. Paul told Timothy, "set an example for the believers..." that is, have a **good** influence on the church.

II. SOMEONE IS WATCHING YOU TO FORM AN OPINION OF CHRISTIANS.

- A. We all depend on some "clock" to regulate our lives:

Illustration: In a little western town, there was a jewelry store that had a clock in the window. People set their watches by it and depended on it. One day the clock stopped. Children were late to school and business men were late to open their stores. The whole town was off schedule. Their standard had failed.
- B. We are someone's "clock" for religious guidance:
 1. We are someone's ideal of a Xian.
 2. It may be a younger person.
 3. It may be a classmate at school.
 4. It may be a person you know socially.
- C. Someone is probably looking to you as an example for in speech, in life, love, and faith.
 1. The question is: Do you mislead them?
 2. Are they better or worse for following your example?

III. WE DO INFLUENCE PEOPLE IN MANY WAYS.

- A. Some other ways that the NT mentions influence:
- B. Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13).
 - 1. There is nothing exciting about salt, but it influences things in many ways.
 - 2. It does not bubble, pop, snap or crackle, but works without great excitement.
 - 3. Some of the most effective Xian examples are like that.
 - a. Salt preserves.
 - b. It gives flavor (Job 6:6).
 - c. It seasons (brings out flavor).
 - d. It can destroy if not used properly.
 - 4. Godly Xian lives are a seasoning influence in a world characterized by rottenness in politics, business, sports, art and entertainment.
- C. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world..." (Mt. 5:14-16).
 - 1. "A Xian is not just to be good, but good for something."
 - 2. It is the nature of light to radiate abroad--"Let it shine."
 - 3. Its purpose is not self-service, but shining for others.
 - 4. If one lets the crowd of worldliness block out the Son of Righteousness, our influence will diminish (Mt. 5:15).
- D. We influence people with **words**.
 - 1. See Psa. 39:1; Jas. 3:2.
 - 2. One does not need to steal or commit adultery to be lost: gossiping and being busybodies will do it (1Pet. 4:15).
 - 3. Our words have a great impact to influence men and we are responsible for using them with great care (Jas. 1:19-20; Mt. 12:36-37).
- E. Our **actions** have great influence on people.
 - 1. See Lk. 6:46; Jn. 15:14; 1Jn. 5:3.
 - 2. It does little good to watch our words if our actions are unrestrained and irresponsible.
 - 3. What is in our heart will usually be shown by our words and behavior.
 - 4. In order to DO good, we must BE good.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. See 1Tim. 4:12.
- B. It will require a spiritual housecleaning to accomplish this.
- C. The world is not won by institutions but by how we reflect the light of X in our life.
 - "The Gospel According to You"
 - You are writing a gospel, A chapter each Day
 - By deeds that you do, By words that you say.
 - Men read what you write whether faulty or true.
 - Say! What is the gospel according to you?
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.