

# LIFE GROUP LESSON

I AM • Week of May 21

## Introduction

Every one of us is a leader. If you influence at least one other person, you are a leader. Think about it. This includes *you*. How well are you leading these days? Do you see yourself as a leader, someone who has the capacity to influence another individual for good? Influence is more than what the culture often projects. It's more than having a platform or a 'fan club' as we might think. Pastor Craig Groeschel says in his Global Leadership message, *Don't Waste Your Influence*: "True and lasting influence is always about people." What does Jesus say about your capacity to influence other people for his glory? "You are the light of the world – like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5:14). You possess great God-given ability to point other people to the love of Christ. And if you know the Source of life and living water, you also have a great mandate to lead souls out of darkness and into the Kingdom of Christ.

## Read Matthew 5:13-16

Think of a time (perhaps before you were a Christian) when someone shining brightly for Christ influenced you to want 'what they had' – a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. What is the difference in self-promoting deeds and 'good deeds' that point others to our heavenly Father?

## Read John 4:4-19

In Jesus' day, Jews hated Samaritans and Samaritans hated Jews. It was thought by many Jews that a Samaritan 'was less than human and worse than a dog.' Jews would avoid going through Samaria. Yet, Scripture says "Jesus *had* to go through Samaria" on his way from Judea to Galilee (v4). Why does Jesus intentionally go through Samaria, when most Jews would avoid Samaria? Jesus always has a reason for doing what He does. After sending his disciples to buy food, Jesus rests beside a well. Soon after the disciples leave for town, a Samaritan woman comes to draw water about noontime. Why did the woman come to draw water during the hottest part of the day? How does Jesus engage her in conversation? What does Jesus ask of her? What do you learn from these first few verses in John, chapter four?

## 1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

It is very likely that most people in the village of Sychar saw an immoral woman when they looked at this woman; yet, Jesus sees a miracle waiting to happen. Leadership and influence about about seeing the potential in another individual. Are you all about you? Or do you care about other people around you? It is easy to get self-absorbed; it's also miserable. What will it take for you to start seeing the people around you? If you are at all miserable with *you*, take a moment and simply ask the Lord to help you start caring about others. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to the people he puts in your path. The person he may want you to see may be right in front of you. Other times, you might have to go out of your way, like Jesus did.

## Read John 4:25-42

## 2. What are you going to do about it?

The story of this broken Samaritan woman proves that you don't have to be perfect or have your life all together to influence people for Jesus. You don't have to pray the perfect prayers, or have gone without sinning for an entire week. You just have to care about people and know the Source of living water, the Lord Jesus Christ. The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back into the village telling everyone: "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?" People came 'streaming' from the village to see the person she had met. They begged him to stay longer, and he did – "long enough for many more to hear his message and believe" (v41). Are you willing to leave your 'jar' beside the well and spread the Good News of Messiah?

## 3. How can we help you?

Pastor Groeschel tells about a time he had the opportunity to meet an athlete that he looked up to. He complimented the man's cool bracelet with words that read: "The Lord Is My Strength and My Shield". The man said, I feel like the Lord wants me to give you this bracelet. He gave it to Pastor Craig (this was before Pastor Craig was a Christian), and he said he remembers thinking: "Whatever he

has, I want.” The kind athlete’s seed of influence was planted in the soil of Pastor Craig’s heart. Kindness, generosity, expressions of goodness and faithfulness – even a smile – are all ways to influence for good. How and in what dark places does God want you to shine your light? Take a moment and think about this.

### **In Closing**

Influence is not always instant. It’s not always obvious. Yet, one act of love and generosity can influence us to emulate the same love and generosity. Pastor Craig said that years later, after he became a Christian, he began to give away cross pins. One day, going into a 7-Eleven, a woman behind the counter complimented his pin. Remembering the bracelet story, he said, “I’m glad you like it because it is for you” and reached out to give it to her. She initially tried to refuse the gift saying, “I’m not worthy.” But Pastor Craig said, “there was a time I wasn’t either. But you are just the kind of person Jesus loves” and he prayed with her.

Years later, that same gal began coming to Life Church and reintroduced herself to Pastor Craig. She said that one little gift changed her life. She then prayed for Pastor Craig! You never know what one friendly smile, one act of kindness or expression of generosity will do. It may very well be like a seed that takes root in the hardest of hearts. Do your part and let the Holy Spirit do the rest. You are not just a leader, you’re a spiritual leader. Let your light shine for Christ. Don’t waste your influence. Use it to transform a life, in Jesus’ name.

### **Close in a Time of Prayer asking:**

How can I pray for my fellow Life Group participants this week?

### **One Year Bible Reading**

May 21: 1 Samuel 29:1-31:13, John 11:55-12:19, Psalm 118:1-18, Prov. 15:24-26

May 22: 2 Samuel 1:1-2:11, John 12:20-50, Psalm 118:19-29, Proverbs 15:27-28

May 23: 2 Samuel 2:12-3:39, John 13:1-30, Psalm 119:1-16, Proverbs 15:29-30

May 24: 2 Samuel 4:1-6:23, John 13:31-14:14, Psalm 119:17-32, Proverbs 15:31-32

May 25: 2 Samuel 7:1-8:18, John 14:15-31, Psalm 119:33-48, Proverbs 15:33

May 26: 2 Samuel 9:1-11:27, John 15:1-27, Psalm 119:49-64, Proverbs 16:1-3

May 27: 2 Samuel 12:1-31, John 16:1-33, Psalm 119:65-80, Proverbs 16:4-5

# I AM

**Text: Matthew 5:13-16, John 4:9-19**

## **Plain Truth:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **your Influence.**

## **3 Steps to Not Waste Your Influence**

**1. Don’t \_\_\_\_\_ yourself.**

**2. Get in the \_\_\_\_\_.**

**3. \_\_\_\_\_ your Influence with**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**May 21, 2023**