

- Everybody influences somebody and everybody is influenced by somebody

PSALM 1:1-3(NLTSE) “ Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. 2 But they delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night. 3 They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.”

- We become like the people we spend most of our time with:

1 CORINTHIANS 15:33(NLTSE) “bad company corrupts good character.”

- The scripture requires that we don’t “stand around” with sinners but we need Holy Spirit wisdom to live close enough to the lost, to positively influence them for Jesus.

2 CORINTHIANS 2:14-15(NLTSE) “ But thank God! He has made us His captives and continues to lead us along in Christ’s triumphal procession. Now He uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume. 15 Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is *perceived differently* by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing.”

- Perceived differently: some will appreciate the message and lifestyle of Jesus we share, and some won’t. Don’t be surprised if you lose so called “friends” because of your faith.

- This is a description given to some of the disciples:

ACTS 17:6(NKJV) “These who have *turned the world upside down* have come here too.

ROMANS 12:2(NLTSE) Don’t copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

- Everybody is affected by the devil in some way or the other:

1 JOHN 5:19(NKJV) We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one

- The key is to not let the world corrupt you:

JAMES 1:27(NLTSE) Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and *refusing to let the world corrupt you*

- We have the opportunity to make a positive difference
- When you leave a place, what are you remembered for?
- Always try and leave a place or a person, better off, because of having spent time with you

CARE GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think people can so easily influence each other?
2. How can we keep the world from corrupting us? (see JAMES 1:27)
3. In what ways do *you* influence the world for Jesus? Discuss this with your group