

February 28, 2021 James Gallaher
Influencer Series: What Is An Influencer!

An influencer is a person who has the ability to affect the purchasing decisions of others because of their authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with their audience (described by Google). If influencers and their platforms in our society today are able to influence people to make certain purchases, are there still those who are capable of influencing the Kingdom of God?

The Kingdom of God works on a currency, too. **Matthew 6:19-21** *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* There will come a day when we stand before God that the only thing that will remain of our lives are the things that have eternal value. Those eternal things are the ones we lead to Jesus Christ.

Webster defines influence as the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something. Our society has hijacked the word influence as they get paid to influence others. Influencers used to be the people who called out vision in a life, encouraged one to keep on fighting when weary, and were those who had deep relationships. Are there still those who influence this way? What does it mean to be an influencer in the Kingdom of God? Influencers begin with people, not platforms.

Many things divided Jews and Samaritans. **John 4:3-4** *He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. And He had to pass through Samaria.* Jesus raised alarms as he traveled through Samaria. **John 4:5-9** *So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)*

That Jesus, a Jew, was talking to a Samaritan and a woman was a racial, political, and theological problem. There was no common ground between these two people groups. Why would Jesus be compelled to go through Samaria? It was not the norm or acceptable at that time. Jesus went because He had what the Samaritan woman needed – a need that only He could fill. An influencer tries to convince you that you are lacking what they are promoting but it usually continues to promote more and more of what is lacking in our lives – not fulfilling. Jesus comes to fulfill not just a desire but also a need. Is there a searching in you, a brokenness? Jesus is the answer. Jesus has what we need to be fulfilled.

The Samaritan woman was extremely broken, being ostracized by her community and yet was searching. Jesus always speaks to the heart of the matter. **John 4:13-14** *Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."*

John 4:15 *The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw."* She was confused by Jesus' words and desired water (physical water) that would take her out of the situation she was in and out of her shame of drawing water. That was her thirst – freedom of shame.

John 4:16 *He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here."* Jesus sets people free and does not speak in a condemning way. He saw her brokenness of five husbands and the emptiness of her life situation. Maybe she had given up on marriage so was only living with the 6th man, but she was still thirsty. He has what she needed. Only He could satisfy. Jesus was not shaming her or calling out her sin. Jesus was calling out purpose in her life. This woman was well known because of her failures. Jesus wasn't calling out her past; He was calling out her potential. Each one of us has potential. Jesus went to one woman.

How often do we disqualify ourselves because of our pain, the brokenness in our lives, where we come from, or where we've been? Jesus crossed Samaria to give her what she needed and Jesus has crossed eternity to give each one of us what we need. There is good that comes when we accept the one who comes to deliver us. Don't ignore what God can use. God can use our brokenness to bring about His purpose. God can use our pain to bring about healing.

John 4:27 *At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?"* The disciples' prejudices were standing in the way of what Jesus was trying to do. These were the very ones who walked with Jesus every day – seeing miracles – yet they missed this opportunity because of their preferences. We need to see ourselves in this story. Are we blinded by our prejudices and miss opportunities to share Jesus?

Our encounters don't change people, but Jesus will change them. So we need Jesus in us so they can see. **John 4:28-29** *So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and said to the men, "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?"*

John 4:39-42 *From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done." So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. Many more believed because of His word; and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world."*

They came to her and they believed in the One Savior of the world. We don't need a platform to have a following; we just need to see the person that is in front of us. We can be an eternal influence for Jesus. What brokenness or shame leaves us unqualified to be an influencer? Don't ignore our failures when they can be a starting point. It is enough for Him when we give it to Him. Our society is fractured; church is fractured, we have immovable positions, our influence is diminished; yet Jesus can cross the barriers. Don't make others believe me but take them to The One.

Have we experienced the kind of thirst that wants to take us out of our (broken) situation? A thirst or longing for something that satisfies?

Are you ignoring a failure that God can use?

What preferences or thoughts need to be broken down in our lives so that we can influence others?