



05.12.24

Group Guide

Influence



Introduction

It might not always feel like it, but you’ve been given a lot. And when followers of Jesus love him with whatever they have — unique influence, resources, insight, etc. amazing things happen. Throughout this series, we’re exploring what it means to love God with all our strength and discovering just how much God can accomplish through us when we do. In week 1, Pastor John taught us how we can love God with the “muchness” of our influence.

Discussion

1. **Revisit and read Mark 12:28-31.** The most important commandment — what God wants from us — is to love him with all our strength (or muchness) and to love our neighbors as ourselves. How do you feel about this command and how do you see it practically in your life?
2. **Revisit and read Matthew 5:14-16.** Everyone has influence. If you’re a follower of Jesus, you are representing him (and PLC) everywhere you go. Where and how do you have influence right now?
3. In order for you to love God with the muchness of your influence, you need to **slow down** and receive what he has for you. Even Jesus had this as a regular practice in his life (Mark 1:35, Luke 6:12-13, and Matthew 15:29.) How often are you slowing and quieting for God to speak to your heart and mind? What gets in the way?
4. In order for you to love God with the muchness of your influence, you need to slow down so you can **show up**. Be interruptible, available, authentic, and approachable with the people in your life. Who in your life has modeled this well or been this person for you?
5. In order for you to love God with the muchness of your influence, you need to slow down so you can show up, and when you show up, it’s better to **shut up and listen first**. When you’re in a conversation, do you find yourself listening to respond or listening to understand? How does it feel when you encounter someone who either can’t (or won’t) stop talking first?

Application

- **Read the room.** Recognize where you have influence and learn the impact your influence is having right now. Ask someone to share what it's like to interact with you.
- **Get quiet.** Make time to slow down with God. Start simple with just five minutes of time dedicated to listening for God's
- **Prioritize people.** Make time to show up and care for the people in your life right now because:
 - You're motivated to love others out of God's love for you (and they matter to you.)
 - You'll have opportunities to have spiritual conversations along the way.
 - When life gets tough (and it will,) you'll be one of the people they reach out to.
 - God has commanded us to.
- **Listen first.** When entering a conversation, be more interested than interesting. (And most people will find you more interesting because you're interested in them.) Being present and patient enough to listen will help you actually understand someone and hear what's being said below the surface. Ask someone to share what it's like being on the other side of a conversation with you.