

## Relationship outside of the Christian Bubble

**Relevant Bible Verses:** Matthew 5:14-16, 9:9, 28:19-20 ; Ephesians 5:1 ; Romans 10:14 ; Hebrews 10:24-25

**Main Points:** We have been taught throughout our lives to associate with like-minded people as it avoids confrontation, and we cannot be influenced negatively by them; namely, hanging around people with the same faith, ideals, beliefs, etc. However, we cannot influence the world, and bring people into God's kingdom if we do not *go out* and show them the love of Jesus where they are at.

### **Message Notes:**

- Who we hang out with is who we become. We teach both ourselves, and our children, to associate with our own, not with those who would be a bad influence on us.
- The positive aspect of this is that we get good at picking friends, people who are like-minded, and who support our beliefs and thoughts. In addition, we avoid confrontation which we often prefer.
- The fear we often have is that, through hanging around people of a different or negative crowd, they'll influence us and potentially have a negative impact on our faith and our life, so we avoid them.
- A question to ask is this: How many close friends do we have within our Christian Bubble? How many without? And of those without, how many can we actually say are *close* friends? It is likely to be lopsided.
- Why are we so afraid of being the ones who are influenced? What will happen if we allow ourselves to be impacted by these people?
- The question we ask should not be *how are we influenced*, but ***who is influenced?*** Can we not be the ones doing the influencing?
- Jesus would not have made the impact he had on the world if he only hung out with like-minded people. Scripture shows that he hung out with the degenerates of the time, the prostitutes, tax collectors, lepers, and others of their type. Those who had been cast aside and unacknowledged by the church.
- Jesus made a point of being *outside* of the church walls with those who needed him, far different from what the leaders of the church would have had him be. They would have had him be what they expected him to be; a hero to overthrow the Romans. However, as he said, it is not the healthy but the sick, not the righteous but the sinners, that need help.
- How do we grow the church? By using pamphlets and sitting within the walls of the church? Jesus did not.
- ***How to apply to our lives:*** What does this mean for us? It means that we should use Jesus' life as a model for how we live our lives. We cannot be so afraid of

being influenced by being with outsiders that we don't associate, because we will never reach the world that way.

- Our faith *should not* be dependant on those around us. If that is the case, we need to look inside, because our faith should be reliant on God alone. He will take care of that. Our job is to influence others and reveal the love of God to them.
- We build the church through relationship. As Jesus brought us into relationship while we were still sinners, it is our job to show that love to those around us.
- The difference we can make if we look past appearances and see others as lost, in need of a savior, is exponential.
- **Summary:** We build the church through relationship. And relationship can only occur if we go *outside* of the church walls and seek the lost. Our job is to point the way, be the light, and show others the unconditional love of Christ. If we will not point the way, then how will they know? If we do not get close to people, then why would they open up to us? Be the shoulder for them to lean on, and shine in places of darkness.

**For Further Study:**

- The Challenge is this: Find someone you don't like or that you don't agree with. Don't argue with them, don't try to force them to listen to you. Try to connect with them and see what happens as a result.