

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Good Influence

(Michael Baker)

Stephen King once said, “We never know which lives we influence, when, or why.” Whether we want to or not, we influence those surrounding us every day. Influence is the ability to have an effect on the character of someone or something. Our influence is displayed by the reputation we have with our fellow man. While searching for men to appoint as shepherds here at Parkview, we must look for those who “*have a good testimony among those who are outside.*” (1 Timothy 3:7)

Every person has the potential to influence others by our character. Our influence effects the reputation we have among men and can be used for good or bad. Personal influence is capable of changing evil to good, or even good to evil.

We should all desire to have a good influence. There is both value and purpose tied to one of good influence. *Proverbs 22:1* tells us that a good name is desired among men. *Ecclesiastes 7:1* states that a good name is more valuable than precious ointment. There is also a purpose in desiring to have a good influence. Jesus says in *Matthew 5:16*, that it is so those around us “may see our good works and glorify our

Father in heaven.” Our reputation persists long after we are dead. The Hebrew writer says Abel “being dead still speaks” through the way he lived unto God.

How might we influence those around us? *Matthew 12:35* says “*a good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things...*” Have you ever thought about those around us who notice how we speak? While in the work place you may be surrounded by filthy language and the crude jokes that spew out of the mouth of your coworkers. But you may eventually notice that your personal conversations with them will cease to be clouded with their vulgarity. That is not because you have become deaf to the “Un-Christ-like” language they use, but rather because of your good edifying words. Those same people would never think twice about your character, let alone theirs, if you used the same language as they.

Churches have influence. In 2 Cor. 8:8, Paul used the earnestness of the Macedonians who gave liberally out of their poverty, to encourage liberal giving among the Corinthians. But the power of influence can be seen both ways. In 2 Cor. 9:2, the Corinthians zealous preparedness caused the

Macedonians to be stirred up. Paul used the earnestness of the Macedonian church to stir up a sincere love in the Corinthians for the needy saints in Jerusalem. He also used the zealous preparedness of the Corinthians to stir up the heart of the Macedonians for the needy saints. It is encouraging to know that we are most certainly not alone in living a life of godliness. Sadly, there are those of the world who will never notice nor heed our influence. We must press on living a life that Christ would be pleased with, no matter the hearts of our peers.

As those of the world notice we have given ourselves to be “*living sacrifices unto God*” *Romans 12:1*, they may take interest. They may inquire what exactly it means to “*live Holy for I am Holy*” *1 Peter 1:15*. Our Good influences will open doors for the cause of Christ. But just as many doors will slam shut when the people of the world see us living life as they do. Elders must have a good influence among non-Christians. But we all should strive to have a good influence on non-believers. Remember we have no idea who can or will be affected by our godly lives. But we can decide to be a good influence, by living godly lives now.