

General Leadership Principles

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Course description: General Leadership Principles Part 6

This course deals with the power of our influence as leaders. This is the third of four lessons designed to consider the influences in history, biblical influences, influences in our lives personally, and how we can improve in our ability to influence others. These lessons follow the Dale Carnegie lessons on “How to Influence People to our Way of Thinking.”

Course Objectives: By the end of the class students will have:

- A. Studied five insights based on John Maxwell’s material about the Law of Influence.
- B. Examined five passages from Matthew in consideration of the effects of hypocrisy on our influence.

Outline of the class:

- A. Influence is one of the most important areas in the realm of leadership. There are numerous areas that need to be considered, and today we will look at five specific insights about influence in leadership.
- B. Based on ideas expressed in John Maxwell’s book, the following insights help us understand the nature of influence.
 - 1. People are always watching
 - a. Home, work, church, world – there is always someone watching us.
 - b. Nothing is more convincing than consistency and nothing is more damaging than hypocrisy.
 - c. Divide the class into five groups (depending on the size of the class). Give one passage below to each group. Ask them to consider how Jesus expressed the challenges of hypocrisy in the following passages, and then write out how they would describe this today.
 - i. Matthew 6:2-8, 16-18
 - ii. Matthew 7:1-5
 - iii. Matthew 7:15
 - iv. Matthew 15:8-9
 - v. Matthew 23
 - d. After the task is completed, ask each group to share with the rest of the class what they learned from the text and its connection to today.

2. People tend to do what people see
 - a. If followers cannot see the example in us, they will follow the example of someone else.
 - b. Think about the instruction Paul gave to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12-16.
 - i. Timothy was to be an example in five areas: speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.
 - ii. Paul concludes by telling Timothy to pay close attention to himself and his teaching. The idea is that both of these areas need to align.
 - iii. The conduct or example of his life needed to be consistent with his teaching. This way, people can see an example of how to emulate the same thing in their own lives. Leaders would do well to follow this instruction today.
 - c. Ask each group to take 4-5 minutes and describe ways people follow someone else's example today.
 - d. After they finish the task, ask them to share with the rest of the class. A few areas to consider include the following:
 - i. The way they dress (sports clothing, business, casual, etc.)
 - ii. The way they walk, play a sport, or act.
 - iii. The way they speak, types of phrases, words, etc.
 - iv. The way they preach or teach.
 - v. The way they treat other people (abusive, kind, etc.)
 - vi. The way they drive a car.
 - vii. The way they sing or play an instrument.
3. It is easier said than done
 - a. We all know how much easier it is to tell someone what to do than it is to actually do it ourselves.
 - b. Mark Twain once said, "To do what is right is wonderful. To teach what is right is even more wonderful...and much easier."
 - c. Parents often tell their children, "Do what I say, not what I do." This is one of the highest and most damaging forms of hypocrisy. We have to begin in the home with demonstrating consistency.
 - d. Our children deserve an example of how to live, not just to be told how to live.

4. Change ourselves before changing others
 - a. Change is never easy.
 - b. Change can be either good or bad.
 - c. Change is biblical, and change is essential to grow. They go hand in hand with the other.
 - d. The challenge before us is the desire to change others before we have first changed ourselves.
 - e. Why would someone else desire to follow our influence, if we have not made the necessary changes in our own life before encouraging others to change? It begins in us.

5. The greatest gift is a good example
 - a. The time we put into setting a good example for others is worth the price we pay.
 - b. Consider the example Jesus set for us. Examine His life of compassion and outreach. He provided, strengthened, guided, encouraged, cared for, and lifted the hands of others. He served. Let us follow with the same example for others today.
 - c. We need to be known for our service to others. When we put the needs of others above our own, we set the right kind of example. Look at Paul's instruction to the church at Philippi in Philippians 2:3-5.
 - d. Ask the class to describe examples of how to put the needs of others above their own. Make a list on the whiteboard.
 - i. Pray for someone by name. Better yet, pray with them.
 - ii. Volunteer in the community.
 - iii. Provide food, clothes, or water for a family in need, homeless person (involve your children).
 - iv. Sit with an elderly person and visit.
 - v. Genuinely encourage someone's activity or behavior.
 - vi. Write a card to someone, send a text, or make a call.

Conclusion:

- A. These five insights provide support for understanding the importance of our influence and they lay the groundwork for thinking about how we can grow and improve our influence in the lives of others.

- B. The principle of influence is one that leaders need to learn well and practice the areas needed to have the right kind of influence to lead others in the direction God desires.
- C. Next week, we will conclude our study in influence, as we examine specific ways we can grow and improve our influence.

Recommending Reading:

Maxwell, John. *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*