

"Our Influence"

The Present Truth – May 31, 1900

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Do you know that there is not a single little particle of matter in all the universe of God but what has an influence? Not simply an influence somewhere, but an influence everywhere.

This is not because there is any power in the matter itself, but because God fills all the things that He has made with His own Spirit and power.

You have heard of this power perhaps under different names of the power that attracts every single particle of matter to every other, and holds them together so that they form the stones, rocks, and the dust of the ground that make up this great world. You have heard, too, of the power that attracts things so that they move toward the earth, instead of away from it; like the apple falling from the tree, that led Sir Isaac Newton into a train of thought that showed him how this same power is working to attract the heavenly bodies to each other. This is what keeps them in their places, and draws them in their appointed orbits.

Though this power is called different names by men, yet it is really all one, the work of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ, in whom all things "hold together." (See Colossians 1:17.) ["And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."]

The influence, the attracting power, that one thing has over another, is the drawing of this Spirit of love, which binds the whole universe into one great brotherhood, as we learned last week. Perhaps you remember the question that the Lord asked Job:

"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the
Pleiades [or the seven stars]
Or loose the bonds of Orion?"

These sweet influences, these bands that hold together all the works of God, are "the cords of love," with which the Lord draws and unites all. And so close is the tie that binds them, that every movement of every single body is felt through all, and has an influence which affects the movements of all.

But as they are all under the control of the one great spirit, there is always perfect harmony, and not one ever moves out of time or place. As the Psalmist tells us:

"They abide this day according to thine ordinances,
For all things are Thy servants."

But to you, His human children formed in His image to be His dwelling place, God has given a much larger measure of His Spirit and power. Yet He has left you free to choose whether the power of the life He has given shall be used for good or evil.

Remember, dear children, as you think over this, that "none of us liveth to himself." Think of the awful power of your life over others, and of how far your influence will reach. To impress this solemn thought upon us, some one has said:

"No life can be pure in its purpose and strong in its strife
And all life not be better end stronger thereby."

Perhaps you do not see how this can be,—that your life, which seems so hidden and unimportant, can influence the whole world. Yet so it is; not simply your life as a whole, but your every action makes itself felt. We cannot have a better illustration of this great truth than one that has been often used: Throw a stone into a pool of water, and watch the result. See the influence of the stone upon the water. The movement of the stone causes a movement in the water as it touches it, and this little inner circle of water influences the water all around it, and this again the water beyond. Thus the ripple spreads, in ever-widening circles, till it reaches the utmost limits of the water, and touches the surrounding shore.

Even so your life, your actions, your movements, have their influence on those around, those whom you touch continually in your daily life. This may be a very small circle perhaps; but these, have in turn their Influence upon others, and what that influence is, is partly the effect of your influence upon them; and so you have your share in this also. Then those whom they influence in turn influence others, a wider circle, and the whole world feels the effect of your life.

Read carefully and remember the beautiful words in which one, writer expresses this, after telling us to patiently do is the work that has nearest which, if performed with faith and diligence, "will be felt to the uttermost parts of the earth":—

"God often uses the simplest means to accomplish the greatest results. It is His plan that every part of His work shall depend on every other part, as a wheel within a wheel, all acting in harmony. The humblest worker, moved by the Holy Spirit, will touch invisible chords, whose vibrations will ring to the ends of the earth, and make melody through eternal ages."

So you see that it is true, not that we each may have an influence somewhere, but that we each must have an influence everywhere.

Is it not a very solemn thought, that the whole world will feel the influence of your life, whether for good or evil? And do you not owe it to others for their sakes to be true, to be pure, to be strong, to be filled with the holy, loving Spirit of Jesus so that your influence will always be for good?

Seen in this light, there are no "little things," for the effects of even our smallest actions are great beyond our power to measure. Even your conduct when no eye sees you, those things which are known only to yourself, by their influence upon you for good or evil change your character, and thus affect your influence upon others.

So be good in order that you may do good. And "do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the people you can," while the days are going by. It may seem that you can do very little, but this is the strongest reason for doing what you can. Because you can do so little, be sure that you never lose an opportunity of doing that little.

"If a smile we can renew,
As our journey we pursue,
Oh, the good we all may do,
While the days are going by."

It does not seem much, does it, to bring back a smile to one sad face? Yet see what may be the results coming from even so small a thing so "one sweet smile."

"One owed smile and two kind words;
Three merry laughs, like the songs of birds;
Four bright faces that once were sad;
Five little hearts made cheery and glad;
Six brave fathers doing their best;
Seven tired mothers strengthened and blessed;
Eight dear children filled full of glee;
Nine happy families pleasant to see;
Ten big blessings in one short while,—
And all springing forth from one sweet smile."