
Impact

Influence On Others and From Others

“A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.” - Matthew 5:14

Chuck Swindoll writes:

“In his book, A Thinking Man's Guide to Pro Football, Paul Zimmerman quotes a physicist who made an incredible discovery. The man had the facts to prove that when a 240-pound lineman (capable of running 100 yards in eleven seconds) collides with a 240-pound running back (capable of covering the same distance in ten seconds), the resultant kinetic energy is enough to move 66,000 pounds - or thirty-three tons - one inch.

“That helps explain why some players stagger around the field mumbling to themselves after their bell has been rung during a collision. The likelihood is that they have been hit on the helmet by a blow approaching 1,000 Gs (1,000 times the force of gravity.) Astronauts on takeoff experience approximately 10 Gs. Pilots tend to black out at about 20 Gs. An older issue of Sportsweek magazine stated that tests run on Detroit Lion's linebacker, Joe Schmidt, reportedly showed that he had to cope with blows, which registered at 5,780 Gs. Small wonder that football, at various levels, kills twenty-eight players a year... or that half the veterans of pro ball will die before age fifty-eight... or that one survey revealed that each year thirty-two college and high school football players become paraplegics. The game has changed from merely a contact sport to a collision sport. With unbelievable force, athletes chosen for their abnormal size and remarkable speed, stun, cripple, and even kill each other upon impact. The human body was never designed by God to handle collisions of that magnitude, no matter how strong or coordinated or big it may be. We simply cannot take the physical impact.”

Such physical impact is fairly easy to understand and measure. What about spiritual impact? What impacts us spiritually? How do we impact others? A careful consideration of the Scripture shows the great potential for impact, on us and by us, both negative and positive.

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1. Who are some of the people who have had a positive impact on you and what made their impact so significant?

2. Do you think it is possible to get through life and have no impact on others? What are some of the ways we impact others even when we are not aware?

3. Does a person need to be especially talented or to possess a certain kind of temperament to have a good impact on others?

4. Is impact something we do by design or something that "just happens?"

5. List some things we can do by design that might enhance our possibilities of having positive impact on others.

6. Are there any things you are doing solely with the purpose of making a positive impact on others for Christ?

7. This congregation has been in this place for _____ years. During that time this church has had some impact. If we were to try to trace the trail of impact of this church, what would be some of the things we would look at?

8. If God allows this church to exist for another _____ years at this spot, what sort of impact would we like to see it have?

9. Read Matthew 5:13-16. By modest estimate, more than a quarter of the entire population of the United States has professed an "evangelical conversion experience." William Iverson wryly observes that "A pound of meat would surely be affected by a quarter pound of salt. If this is real Christianity, the 'salt of the earth,' where is the effect of which Jesus spoke?" (Christianity Today, June 6, 1980, p.33) Why is the impact of the church so lacking in today's world?

10. Read 1 Corinthians 7:16. What are some ways a Christian can influence an unbelieving mate?

11. Read Philippians 2:14-15. What is the instruction here that has to do with impact?

12. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7. In what ways can a church impact other churches?

13. Read 1 Timothy 6:1. Is it possible for an employee to impact an unbelieving boss? How?

14. Read Hebrews 11:4. In what way does Abel "still speak?"

15. Read 1 Peter 2:11-12. How can we maximize the possibility of impacting the unbelieving world around us?