

CREW Bible Study

Message – The YOU Effect - Week 1

- **BOTTOM LINE:** You have more of an effect than you think.
- **GOAL:** To help students understand that they have more of an effect and an influence than they may realize.
- **SCRIPTURE:** *After this, Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. (It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration.) Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?" He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do. Philip replied, "Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!" Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?" Tell everyone to sit down," Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, "Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted." So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. When the people saw him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, "Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!" – John 6:1-14*

MESSAGE

Have you ever been around someone who had a huge effect on people? Who comes to mind?

- Someone who is so fun and so funny that everyone wants to hang out with them?
- Someone who is just so nice that being around them literally makes you want to be a better person?
- Someone on your team who works so hard that it makes everyone on the team work harder too?

Keep thinking about that person for a minute and think about this: Do they *realize* they have that effect on people? The truth is, most people don't realize they have an effect or how they could use it. How about YOU?

For the next few weeks, we're talking about the YOU effect, how YOU affect the people and the situations around you. It's about your influence.

For some of you, your YOU effect might be obvious. Maybe you hold some type of leadership position that gives you a clear opportunity to influence others. Or you have friends who almost always come to you for your opinion because they value what you have to say. You influence their decisions.

On the other hand, you might feel like your YOU effect is zero. You might feel like you have zero influence on anyone, anywhere. Even the family pet doesn't listen to you!

Hold on, then. Because no matter what you think about the influence you have – a little or a lot - it's possible, and even probable, that you don't realize how much YOU effect there really is and what could happen because of it.

There's a story in the Bible that shows how much *is* possible. We all know that Jesus had a huge effect on people. Wherever he went, crowds would gather. And this story does begin with a crowd. But that's not the best part of the story.

In the Gospel of John, chapter 6, beginning with verse 1 we hear this:

After this, Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. (It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration.) Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?"

Now, imagine if you were Philip at this point. Wouldn't you be thinking, "Jesus, I thought YOU were the miracle guy. I thought YOU had influence over this kind of thing. Can't you handle this?"

The story continues.....

He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do. Philip replied, "Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!" Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?" Tell everyone to sit down," Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, "Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted." So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. When the people saw him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, "Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!"

Now, there are all kinds of questions that you might be thinking about this story, especially, *how* exactly did he turn 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish into enough food to feed everyone? And *where* did all those baskets come from?

But here's a different question: Who had the biggest influence in this story?

It's easy to see that Jesus had influence. There's a huge crowd of people who came to hear his message; he performs a miracle and feeds over 5,000 of them; and they cheer for him and call him a prophet because of it. Yes, Jesus absolutely had an effect on people!

But there's a superstar in this story that can't go unnoticed: the boy with the lunch. No one would have seen this boy as having influence. He himself would probably say he had zero YOU effect. He was just a kid. And kids were not seen as valued members of society at the time. People thought they should be seen and not heard, and then again, maybe not even seen.

But still, we hear in this story that he's the only one in the crowd who packed a lunch! And sharing that lunch ended up impacting thousands of people. This kid brought all he had to Jesus, and it was enough.

When it comes to you affecting the world around you, it's all about you being willing to show up and offer what you have. Having an impact isn't always about doing *more*, having *more* or knowing *more* people. It's about imagining what God could do with the YOU effect in the space around you, with what you already have.

As you imagine that, here's three things to consider:

1. **Identify the WHO** – Who are the immediate people in front of you that you have the potential to influence?
2. **Identify the WHAT** – What is it that the people around you need? Is it encouragement? Someone to listen? Someone to help with a task?
3. **Identify the HOW** – Figure out what you can do to positively influence the situation and then do it.

Ultimately, this story today is about the power of Jesus and what Jesus is capable of doing. It's about what Jesus can do through someone who is willing to offer what he or she has and let Him use it. You have more of an effect than you think. It's the YOU effect. Don't think that it's not enough. Let it be used for good.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think of when you hear the word "influence" and who comes to mind as an "influencer"?
2. How do you know when you are being influenced by someone else?

3. Who are the people around you that have influenced you the most? What is your story of their impact on you?
4. Who are the people that you have an effect on? Does it excite you or intimidate you to think about having an effect on people and the ability to influence the way they think or act? Why or why not?
5. Read John 6:1-14. Who in the story do you identify with them most?
 - the disciples
 - the crowd
 - the boy with the lunch
6. Which step is the most difficult for you when it comes to having an effect on others:
 - Identifying who needs help
 - Identifying what they need
 - Identifying what you can do and how to do it
7. Once you have identified the who, what and how, what keeps you from following through?
8. When it comes to you affecting the world around you, it's all about you being willing to show up and offer what you have. Having an impact isn't always about doing more, having more or knowing more people. It's about imagining what God could do with the YOU effect in the space around you, with what you already have. Has there been a time in your life where you've seen this to be true?