

Consider Jesus – in the Exercise of Influence

**Thoughts for Daily Duty, Service,
and Suffering**

By [Octavius Winslow](#)

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"Consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess."—Hebrews 3:1

"Be followers of me, even as I am of Christ."—1 Cor. 11:1

INFLUENCE is the subject which these words suggest for our present meditation--the influence of Christ reflected in the influence of the Christian. "Follow me, as I follow Christ." The power of influencing others is a wonderful and responsible gift of God. Every individual possesses it. Unknown though his name, and obscure though his sphere may be, he is the center of a circle touching at every point for good or for evil all who come within the radius of his moral power--the potency of which cannot be measured, the results of which can never be fully known.

No person is absolutely neutral in this life--none so humble as not to take hold on the vitalities of some individual's inner being, thoughts, and feelings. High or low, rich or poor, we throw off from us, and we receive in return, trains of influences which shape the opinions, mold the characters, and determine the destinies, both of ourselves and others. We may not be able to explain the nature or estimate the results of this law; nevertheless, in the last great day the truth will flash upon us with startling effect--"No man lives to himself." The question once defiantly and insultingly asked of God, "Am I my brother's keeper?" will be answered with a Divine affirmative crushing as thunder, or thrilling as music, "You were! and you have ruined him forever by your ungodly example," or, "You have saved him forever by your holy influence!" How solemn this truth! It is this power of action and reaction--this reciprocity of moral influences--which gives a character, reality, and responsibility to all our thoughts, words, and deeds in this present life; and which makes every man, in every circle, to a great extent his brother's keeper. But consider Jesus.

His influence was INDIVIDUAL. There was an individuality in His life which acted powerfully upon all whom it reached. But we forget our individuality! We lose

ourselves in the crowd. We follow it, act with it, and thus we forget that, with regard to the religious opinions which we hold, the moral influence which we insensibly exert, the solemn reckoning which we are finally to meet, "every one of us is to give an account of HIMSELF to God." "Resolved, that I will live and act as an individual." So wrote Harlan Page in his diary; and so he lived and died, and God used his individual influence to the conversion of hundreds. Let us keep in mind the fact, that individual responsibility, duty, and influence, are untransferable. We cannot make them over to a church, or to a society, or to another individual. Born as individuals, we live as individuals, and as individuals we die, and shall be judged.

The example of Jesus was HOLY and SANCTIFYING. All who came into His presence could feel how dreadful, yet how attractive, HOLINESS was! Is ours such? Can we in sincerity say, "Follow me, as I follow Christ?" Is our example as a religious professor such as to influence others for good?--as a parent, such as you would desire your children should imitate?--as a husband or wife, as a brother or sister, as a master or mistress, such as to mold for holiness in this life, and for happiness in the life to come, those whom it daily reaches? Is our example such as to attract them with the beauty of holiness, to impress them with the excellence of Jesus, the service of God, and the solemnity of eternity?

Oh, let your example pencil, like the sun, the image of Christ upon all on whom its transforming rays are reflected. But this can only be as you yourself follow Christ. If you would that others be a holy reflection of you, you yourself must be a true and holy reflection of Jesus. Let the light of your influence so shine, that others seeing may rejoice in it. Be a "living epistle of Christ," so legible and lovely as to be known and read of all men, that all may be affected by the reading thereof. Thus men will behold your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

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