

**SERIES BIG IDEA:**

Influence occurs when we accept, challenge, and encourage others.

**TEACHING BIG IDEA:**

Same as Series Big Idea.

**TEACHING SUMMARY:**

God started the church so we can grow in our relationships with God by following Jesus. We grow in our relationship with God as we take our next step in loving Jesus, becoming like Jesus, and sharing Jesus. We always have a next step in following Jesus; however, we never arrive. The more we follow Jesus, the more Jesus influences us and the more we influence others. We can't gain influence without trust and trust is the foundation of any relationship. We begin to trust others when they accept us. Others begin to trust us when we accept them. We trust Jesus because Jesus accepted us. Influence occurs when we accept, challenge, and encourage others. Westside Family Church Leavenworth wants us to take our next step so our lives are influenced by Jesus and so we can influence others

**TALK IT OVER (DISCUSS ONE OR MORE):**

Most of us have had people in our lives who have been both positive and negative influences on our lives. Share about someone in your life who has been a positive influence. What are things they did or said to influence you? What is more important – words or actions? Why?

Read Matthew 5:13-16. Explain what these verses say about influencing others. Based on these verses, what should be the result of influencing others. Explain why that would be important.

Read Hebrews 10:24-25. What are ways that you can “stir up” others to love and good works?

Read the series Big Idea. Explain in your own words how accepting, challenging, and encouraging others leads to influence.

Take a look at the 12 Next Steps (see <http://westsideleavenworth.com/about-the-twelve>). Which of the twelve next steps have you already taken? Do you have a next step that God wants you to take?

**OTHER SCRIPTURES TO READ:**

--Romans 15:1-7

--Ephesians 1:3-10

--1 Timothy 1:12-17

--Colossians 3:1-14

--Psalm 139:1-18

--Philippians 2:1-11