Influenced

Week One: That’s Toxic

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Production Notes:

* Green highlighted text goes on the screen.
* The underlined words can be the fill in the blank for the handout.

Series Introduction

The next series is pulled from the most famous sermon in history, The Sermon on the Mount. Matthew chapters 5-7

The Sermon on the Mount is a call to live like Kingdom of God citizens.

Kingdom of God people will have a different version of "good" and pursue it in ways that seem odd to people who have aligned themselves (knowingly or unknowingly) with Satan's rebellion.

In the days of Jesus people who claimed to follow God (Torah) had a tendency to bend the teachings of the prophets away from the heart of God.

Jesus wants to attune the application to the implication.

The purpose of this series is to teach people how to live out heaven's values on earth.

We will do this the same way Jesus did, by looking at common cultural sayings and beliefs. "You have heard it said, but I say…."

Welcome to “Influenced,” a practical examination of the phrase Jesus used multiple times, “You heard it said, but I say to you…”

Sermon Introduction.

You have heard it said that we should avoid people we think are toxic.

Lectio:

Matthew‬

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

Meditatio:‬‬

* Merely not murdering someone misses the heart of God. For well over 1,000 years the Jewish people passed along the commandment of God not to murder, but along the way the heart of God was lost.
* The order of anger escalation appears to mismatch the punishment. Previously murder led to judgement. Now mere anger leads to judgment and calling someone a fool can take you to the fires of hell.
* Why does Jesus believe a person is in danger of hell for calling someone a fool, “raca”? The term means “empty headed” or a worthless individual. It’s an attack on the identity of a person. Identity matters a lot to God.
  + There is a difference between someone doing a foolish thing and you labeling someone as worthless.
  + You don’t get to play God. You can’t proclaim an eternal created child of God as worthless or toxic. Yes, they can be filled with toxic ideas and culture, but all people are loved children of God.
  + Illustration: Imagine one of my children did something wrong. Let’s say that one of my children was back talking my wife. I get fired up and finally go to discipline. Pretend I say to my child, “You are worthless.” This is a sinful statement. A statement Jesus dislikes. Why? Because it’s a statement against their identity. I don’t have that power. I can sit them down and call their actions out. I am called to help reconcile them back to their true identity. I should remind that child that they are an amazing child of the living God. “You have immeasurable worth and value. Son, I want to reconcile you back to your true identity. Be who you really are! Be who God says you are.”
* We are to desire eternally created people who are loved by God to lean into God’s given identity for them, not to give them the false identity, “worthless.”
  + You can’t make people do wise things, but you can change your perspective of them.
* Helping people reconcile with God and each other is a core act of worship. If you know your heart is in dissonance toward someone “leave your gift at the altar” and deal with it.
* It won’t always work. That’s ok. Your heart posture is the key. “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” Romans 12:18.

Oratio:

* Pray God gives you a heart for “toxic” people.
* Pray God gives you divine power to remind people of who they are in Jesus.

Contemplatio:

* What is God whispering into your heart? Consider writing on the next steps card.
* Illustration:

Actio:

* Is there an action God is calling you to make?
* Who should you talk to about it?