

How to Live 12 of 12

Influence of Association

#0262

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1964

Now let's look at the blackboard, and you'll see on the left a level plain surface. The more level that is, the less water falling on it will do what? Move, that's right? The motion of water is dependant on the difference in what? Level.

Now on the right, you see those various levels; the water falling, falling, falling. The motion of water on this planet is largely dependent on that. Now we have an apparent reversal of this in the evaporation that takes place over the ocean and other bodies in which the sun pulls the water from the surface of these bodies, lifts it into the clouds where the wind carries the water in that vapor form over the land and it begins its journey again, down, down, down to the sea. A wonderful program, isn't it?

Now, suppose we find a place where the water cannot go from one level to another; it's already down, and there's no place it can get out that's lower. What do you get? What situation do you get? Stagnation, whether it's in a swamp, or in a situation like the Dead Sea, evaporation all the time, but there's no way for those minerals to do anything but to pile up there.

Why is it called the Dead Sea? Because in it and around it there's very little life. Wherever we see life in nature, it's because water is moving. That's the general rule.

Now this afternoon, in this little closing lesson of our series of *How to Live*, I wish you'd turn to *Ministry of Healing*, page 402. And it is possible that somebody this afternoon will get the biggest blessing of the whole series of classes as we study this simple, but fundamental law—The influence of what? Association. Shall we read together?

“God's Word places great stress upon the influence of association, even upon men and women. How much greater is its power on the developing mind and character of children and youth. The company they keep, the principles they adopt, the habits they form, will decide the question of their usefulness here, and of their future, eternal interest” *Ministry of Healing*, page 402.

Then we have here something of great influence. It is what? Association, the people we associate with. Now, a part of our time here at Wildwood, and this is true most any place we might be, is controlled either by individuals or by circumstances. If we go to work in a factory or anything like that, we do not ordinarily have much

choice in who we work with. When we come to school, we don't have much choice in who the other students are. And so in a class, we may be associated with quite a number of people that we had nothing to do with deciding whether they were in that class or not. Other people and circumstances, we would say providence, decided that.

But there's a certain fraction of our time in which we control largely who we associate with. And this is just as important a part of our education, our development, as anything in on-the-job training, or in classes, or our personal time alone with God. This matter of who we associate with and for what purpose is of vital importance in the goal that you and I have.

Now, many educational institutions would not take cognizance of this. I suppose if you were enrolled in one of the universities of the world that the registrar or your teachers would hardly pay any attention to what you did, within reason, of course, outside of school hours. But this program of education in which you and I have a part is one that operates 24 hours a day.

And as we've tried to stress in this class, much of what happens is up to you personally. It is what you do with the opportunities that makes the difference between success and failure, and makes the difference between ordinary success and unusual success. God has chosen you, my dear young friend, for something very unusual. He would never have brought you here if He hadn't. But what you do with your leisure moments, or what you do with the opportunities for association, this as much as any other one factor will determine your success and the measure of your success. We just read that here, haven't we? That is what it said.

Now, there are those that every chance they get, they just hole up. They're like one of these woodchucks out here. They look out and if they see somebody coming, you know what they do? They go back in their hole. If that is your tendency, I invite you, come out in the sunshine. Seek the association of others.

Some of us, on the other hand, have the tendency to be with somebody or want to be with somebody all the time. Yesterday, I gave you a half-hour to be with whom? Yourself and God alone. Did any of you get a blessing in that? Yes, well you can have that every day without my arranging it or assigning it.

But all of your time will not be spent in class or in work or in sleep or in prayer alone with God. There'll be opportunities here and there, perhaps not on a regular schedule, as regular as meals or worship, but nonetheless important opportunities for association with other people. Are you going to leave it to chance, or are you going to have some intelligent choice to make of who you associate with, and for what purpose?

May I suggest to you that from this illustration in nature, we can gather a most wonderful lesson? I would like to suggest to you that your great opportunity in association is to associate with somebody that you have to reach up to or reach out to. If the people you associate with are largely those who are on just about the same

level as you are intellectual, spiritually, and in experience, you will have the situation represented in our line on the left, very little motion, very little accomplished.

On the other hand, if in your association you seek the opportunity to either be with somebody who knows more than you do and learn from that person, or somebody who knows less than you do, and you try to teach that person, then you get water in motion, life in motion and you'll get the blessing either way.

Now, it would be a mistake to spend all your time in either direction. And here again, we find human tendencies come into play. There are those who would be perfectly happy to just get hold of somebody who knows more than they do and just stay with them and learn and learn and learn.

But Jesus Himself, when He trained the 12 and the 70, was sending them out from time to time to people who needed what they had. Not only so, in the daily program, He saw that they got that. They assisted in bringing the sick and those who wanted help to Jesus. And they would mingle with the people afterward and repeat to them the words of Christ, and clear up their misunderstanding.

The picture is so apt and wonderful there in the feeding of the 5,000. You remember Andrew found the little boy who had what? Five loaves and two fishes. And they were brought to Jesus. He blessed them. And then He started doing what? Breaking them off and passing them out. Who to? The disciples. What did the disciples do? Passed them to the multitude.

Elder W. C. White told me once that he heard somebody ask Sister White the question, "Did the bread multiply in Jesus' hands or in the disciples' hands?" She said, "Both." Think of it, friends. Wouldn't it have been wonderful to have been Peter or Matthew or John or Andrew and come up there and watch Jesus take a bun and fill a whole basket full from that little bun? And then you take the basket and start delivering it to 50 people, and low and behold it stretches to reach the 50. But you see, it put every disciple between somebody that had more than he had, and somebody that had less than he had. Do you see? This is your position of greatest privilege and greatest opportunity.

I don't know. I don't know where the baskets came from. The Lord had them there, didn't He? And the Lord will have whatever you need.

But now, don't miss this lesson. How many hands do you have? Two. And for our illustration this afternoon, think of one hand as reaching up to somebody who can help you get nearer to God, somebody that knows more about nursing than you do, somebody that knows more about farming than you do, somebody that knows more about bookkeeping than you do, somebody that knows more about dishwashing than you do, or cooking, or gardening, or Bible Work, or whatever. Do you see? That hand you're reaching out. What for? To get help, to be lifted, to receive. Okay, but not both hands.

That other hand is reaching out and around to somebody that needs what you have. And if they already have everything you have, they don't need it. Do you

know that it's quite hard to find something to satisfy the appetite of a person who has just had a full meal? Some cooks try it, and it leads to the kind of cooking that isn't health reform.

No, here is our position, ever reaching out to somebody who can help us, or ever reaching out to somebody that we can help. And ask God on your knees in prayer, say, "Lord, have You got a friend that I can associate with, old or young, that can really help me, that knows more about the things that I need to learn than I do, that by associating with that person I can learn some things? And Lord, do You have somebody that I can impart something to, somebody that when I am around them, I can share with them something wonderful that they need, that God has helped me get, either in the secret place of prayer or in some class or from one of my friends who has helped to lift me?"

Now, look at this same page *Ministry of Healing*, 402, and we'll call attention to the sentence again that we have already looked at yesterday. Near the end of the preceding paragraph:

"Whatever his calling, he is to be..."

What?

"...both a learner and a teacher as long as life shall last"
Ibid.

Will you read that with me?

"Whatever his calling, he is to be both a learner and a teacher as long as life shall last" *Ibid.*

Tell me, who do you need to be with in order to be a learner? Somebody who knows more than you do. Right? Tell me, who do you need to be with in order to be a teacher? Somebody who knows less than you do. Now it may be only in one area. What I mean is in the particular matter that you're dealing with. They might know more than you do in a hundred other things.

But oh, as long as life shall last, you are to be what? Both a learner and a teacher. Tell me, (And don't miss it!) if you are associating with people who know approximately what you know, can you be either one? Can you? No. Well, when it comes right down to the fine points, probably there are no two people that are precisely level on everything.

We've already studied this matter of individuality. Just as it's hard to find anywhere on this planet ground that is exactly the same elevation. God has arranged it that there can be flow from one direction to the other. But remember, the nearer we approach to level, the nearer we approach to stagnation. The more we seek to enter into the purpose of God to receive from those who have more and to impart to those who have less, the more we contribute to His plan of circulation,

keeping the blessing in circulation. Isn't it a wonderful plan, friends? Will you do it? Oh, I trust that you will.

Now, turn to Matthew 18:19, and you'll see a wonderful promise. We'll read the 20th verse with it. All together:

“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” Matthew 18:19–20.

Jesus is with us. Some of the most precious friendships that God has given me in over a half a century, all the way through from the teen years on to the present hour, have been in claiming this promise, this very one. Oh, I want you right now in your student days to know the joy of two or three meeting together in voluntary prayer bands, not assigned by the faculty or the administration, of your own initiative, representing your own longing for blessing, praying together.

And I would suggest in this prayer band work, you remember the principle we've just been studying. When you think of having prayer with somebody, may I suggest, I'm not trying to make a rule, I'm trying to give you a principle that will help. That's all, try to think of having prayer with somebody that can either help you or somebody that you can help. Do you see what I mean?

Have you ever heard in any schools that you were ever at, of cliques? What I'm studying with you is the thing that avoids cliques. It's the thing that is the direct opposite of it. Why? This: Every individual that understands this principle is seeking an association not to please himself, but to please Jesus and use association as a means of development for Christ's sake. Therefore each individual is continually looking to God for impressions, directions, leadings, providences in reaching out to somebody who can help teach him something, help him learn something valuable, help him to reach a higher standard of development and reaching in the other direction, reaching out for somebody that he can help, that he can share with. And praying together is one of the greatest means of doing both these things—This it, dear friends.

Now, tell me something. You remember the Bible says, it's more blessed to give than to receive. But what do you have to have in order to give something? You have to have a receiver. Is that right? Suppose I would say here, “I want to give away a dollar bill,” but I couldn't find a single person that would receive it. Could I give it away? No. It's more blessed to give than to receive, but did you notice more blessed to give than to receive. Well, then what is it to receive? It is blessed. That's right. It's blessed to receive.

And every association of life—don't miss this—can be an experience of either giving or receiving, or maybe both. But in each case you're being blessed. But remember if you receive, then the way to get a still greater blessing is to do what? To give. And so as you reach out to pray with others who know more than you of the

things of God, remember Jesus is expecting you to turn around and reach out to others who know less of the things of God and share with them what you got. And if you don't, you become what kind of a sea? A Dead Sea. And none of you want that, do you?

Do you know what kind of water flows into the Dead Sea? Fresh, living water flowing in all the time. Does it do any good to change the situation? Not a bit. Oh, my dear friends, no matter how many people try to help you, and no matter how many people you try to get help from, if it stops there, you are a Dead Sea. If you don't use it, you will lose it. If you don't share it, it will become stagnant. And the very blessing that seems so wonderful today won't even smell good in a few days if you don't give it to others.

Now, this brings me to a little point, and yet it's an important point. We're living in an age and in a generation where association is free and easy between men and women of all ages, married and unmarried, teenagers, adults and everybody. This class does not offer me time to go into all the principles that bear on that. But I'll give you this little suggestion. In God's plan during the student days, the association between young men on the one hand and young women on the other is to be in the group, and not individuals pared off.

Why is this? Well, you'll learn more about that in some of our classes in the Christian home. If you would like to learn about it beforehand, you'll find it all in the Spirit of Prophecy. Through the writings of the prophet, God has given us a lot of instructions on this question of association.

Perhaps, I might just read a sentence or two here from *Volume 5*. Writing to a young man concerning the Battle Creek College, the Lord's messenger says:

"I do not wish to have you disappointed in regard to Battle Creek. The rules are strict there. No courting is allowed. The school would be worth nothing to students were they to become entangled in love affairs as you have been. Our college would soon be demoralized. Parents do not send their children to our college or to our offices to commence a lovesick, sentimental life, but to be educated in the sciences or to learn the printer's trade. Were the rules so lax that the youth were allowed to become bewildered and infatuated with the society of the opposite sex as you have been for some months past, the object of their going to Battle Creek would be lost. If you cannot put this entirely out of your mind and go there with the spirit of a learner and with a purpose to arouse yourself to the most earnest, humble, sincere efforts, praying that you may have a close connection with God, it would be better for you to remain at home" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 109.

It is becoming fashionable in the generation of which we are a part for there to be a certain amount of missionary work carried on by young men working for young women, and young women working for young men. And I'm sorry to say, people who ought to know better sometimes encourage it. But as you study the Lord's instructions, you will find, dear friends, that the close working for souls to try to help them calls for a personal interest which in so many cases can be and is misunderstood if it's crossing over this line between young men and young women.

What I mean is this and don't miss it: The young man who comes to an evangelistic meeting because he is interested in the young girl who said, "Well, let's go to the meeting," doesn't really know how sincere his interest is in the truth. The young woman who seeks to help that young man does not know how much her interest is the result of love for her Savior, and how much of it is just interest in the opposite sex.

There's another great principle that enters into it. In Christian association, association may lead to courtship, and courtship may lead to marriage. And in that kind of association people are very unwise to begin something which it would not be right to carry through to the logical conclusion. And so when the days of courtship come, never allow yourself to court somebody that it wouldn't be right to marry. Therefore, do not allow yourself to take a special, personal interest in somebody, dating and personal friendship that might lead to you into involvement of a close personal attachment. Just ask God to help you not to do that.

And so when it comes to this reaching out for somebody who can help you, and reaching out for somebody that you can help, ask God to help you to work in such a way that there can be no misunderstanding of your intentions.

Somebody says, "That's easy. I'm a girl. I'll tell the young man I have no interest in him as an individual. I just want to help him."

Now, would you do that? I hope you wouldn't. And certainly no young man is going to say to a young woman, "Now, I want to interest you in the message. And I want to interest you in Christ. I want to help you in to a better experience. But let's just understand, this is all there is to it."

You might have to eat those words later. Yes, human nature is human nature, friends.

But, if you do not see the logic of any of my suggestions, just take the clear statement of what I've read from Volume 5. Look up in *Counsels to Teachers* along about page 100. You'll find a whole chapter on this subject and clear instructions from the Spirit of Prophecy.

You know one of the great satisfactions that I have here at Wildwood, it really seems a miracle, and it is a miracle that a group of 40 young people can associate together and keep their minds on their business. I think it's a marvelous miracle. And I rejoice in it. You see, not only the time it saves but the energy, the nerve force. And how wonderful it is to take that energy and nerve force and use it in

developing our love for Jesus, our love for those who can help us, and our love for those that we can help without any misunderstanding or any danger of being misunderstood.

Now, since this is my closing class, I want to pick up something that I intended to get in to an earlier class, but time ran out, and we didn't get to it. This is my last thought in this class.

I've stressed the importance of prayer, and of solving our problems in prayer. But there's a little point—no it's a big point that unless you've already learned it, I hope you will get hold of it this afternoon. Because unless you get hold of this, prayer can never accomplish for you what you want it to.

Turn to Mark 11:24. All together:

“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” Mark 11:24.

Do you want something? Is there a problem you are seeking help on? Is there wisdom you are asking for, and you come to God in prayer? Whatever it is that you bring to God in prayer, as you claim His promise, He wants you to do what according to this verse? Believe. Believe what? That you receive. Then you will have it.

Don't miss this. This doesn't mean that anything you pray for you're going to get.

Someone says, “Isn't that what it says?”

Well, it might sound that way. But scripture must be compared with scripture. Prayer is not just asking God for anything that strikes our fancy. Prayer is asking God to fulfill His promise. And anything you're asking for that's worth having, there's a promise that covers it.

When you go to the bank to get money, you must have a check. It must be signed by somebody that has funds in that bank—yourself or somebody else. When you and I come to the bank of Heaven to get a blessing, we present the check signed by Jesus. This is His promise. The whole Bible is full of promises. And in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy we have thousands more. Every one of those promises is a check. And we can bring it to God and ask Him to fulfill His word to us as we meet the conditions.

But my point is, one of the conditions is as we pray to what? Believe. Believe what? That we receive. We're to claim the promise, and thank God that we receive. Some of you have already learned to do this. Some of you are learning some of you, I trust, will begin today. Get into the habit. The way you get into a habit is to do something and then do it again and then do it again. Get into the habit of before you

leave your place of prayer, before you rise from your knees, of telling God that you believe He has heard you and has granted your prayer.

Now, this doesn't mean that if you're praying for something that doesn't have a definite promise, that you just work yourself up into emotion and say, "I know I'm going to get a pair of shoes this week because I'm praying for it. I need it and I know I'll get that pair of shoes." No. But it is your privilege to say, "Dear Lord, I know you've heard my prayers, and I know that You'll give me the pair of shoes when You see I need it. For it is written:

“...my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” Philippians 4:19.

But who decides how much I need? He does. I can decide how much to ask for. He'll decide how much to grant. My need may be far greater than I know about, it may be larger than I recognize; whatever my need, God has promised to give it to me as I claim this promise.

And so day by day as you pray, in the morning when Jesus wakes you up and you kneel by your bed or go to wherever you pray or whatever your position or situation when you're praying, do what does this say? Believe that you receive, and you shall have it. I want every one of you to become a great prayer, a successful wrestler with God in prayer.

Now, we have about five minutes before it's time for us to close and I want to give an opportunity to somebody here that has not yet witnessed in this class, that this afternoon would like to come up here and tell us what God has done for you in this class and what by His grace you intend to do for Him. Somebody that hasn't spoken will you just come up right now as you would like to.

[Testimony Service]

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