

# Lent: Week 3

## Influence with Others

Through the Gospel, Jesus makes us a people for others. His Gospel gives us deep respect and great hope for every non-Christian, and frees and empowers us not to live for ourselves but for our friends, neighbors and associates who don't believe. The Gospel makes us a community where non-Christians are expected, welcomed and respected. Their questions, struggles, and doubts are taken seriously. They are loved not that we might evangelize them, but we evangelize them because we love them. The gospel of Christ overcomes the three main obstacles to an authentic outward face:

## The joy of the gospel overcomes our apathy.

There is a tendency toward uncaring inwardness in each of us. But the gospel fills our lives with such joy that we have tremendous energy for declaring the great things that God has done in Christ (Luke 2:20). When the reality of the gospel grips us, we simply cannot keep our mouths closed.

***Pray about any apathy you have toward reaching out to people far from God with the Gospel.***

## The grace of the gospel overcomes our pride.

There is a tendency for Christians to think and act as if they were superior to unbelievers. But the gospel humbles us--we are saved only by God's grace and not our own goodness or cleverness (Luke 18:13). As a result, we approach unbelievers without superiority and with lots of respect, recognizing that often their wisdom and compassion exceeds our own.

***Pray about how pride has kept you from being outward focused.***

## The love of the gospel overcomes our fear.

There is a tendency not to share the love and gospel of Christ out of fear of criticism or inconvenience. But in the gospel we are embraced by a love so great that it drives out all our fear (1 John.4:18), and frees us to love people with reckless abandon.

***Pray about your fear that keeps you from sharing the Gospel with people.***

# Influence with Others: Lived Out

How do we best steward the influence that God has given us with others? We believe God desired that we be a community of people who:

- Have several unbelievers that we are praying for by name on a daily basis, and are regularly investing time in our relationships with them.
- Are following the leading of God's Spirit as He regularly provides opportunity for sharing the Gospel with those who are not yet believers.
- Regularly demonstrate the grace and mercy of God and the goodness of his Kingdom by participating in ongoing social justice ministry.

Spend some time this week praying about how you might build these disciplines into your life, so that our city might be renewed by peace and grace of Jesus. For practical ideas, be sure to regularly visit [KaleoHouston.com](http://KaleoHouston.com).

## Fasting: Television/Music/Media

This week, forgo the usual shows. In fact, turn off the TV altogether. Drive without the radio. Leave the iPod at home.

What is it like to increase the silence/decrease the media inputs into your life? Do you miss it? Does it make you anxious? Relaxed? Something else? What does your reaction to this fast tell you about your connectedness to media?

Keep journal entries of what silence does for you, what missing certain shows/events means. Spend the time listening for the still small voice of God.

*(Fasts begin Monday and end Saturday- Sundays are "Feast" days when in celebration of the goodness Jesus brings, we break our fasts. You can either do each fast for the week and only for that week or consider letting them build on each other, so that by the end of Lent, you are doing all five weekly fasts at the same time.)*

