



WEEK FOUR

LUKE 7:36-50

A woman shows her thankfulness to Jesus for forgiving her and loving her no matter what.

SAY
THIS

WHO LOVES YOU?
JESUS LOVES ME.



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DO
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BATH TIME

Add some bathtub crayons to bath time this month. Encourage your child to draw long lines. Look at the lines together, and talk about which line is the longest. Say, "Wow! Those are some long lines. Do you know Jesus' love is longer than the longest line? It's true! Jesus' love never, ever, EVER ends!"

REMEMBER THIS

"How wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ."
Ephesians 3:18, NIV

BASIC
TRUTH

JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.

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HOW TO LOSE (AND GAIN) INFLUENCE AS A PARENT

By Carey Nieuwhof

Influence is something to pay attention to no matter what stage of parenting you're in, because ultimately every parent is on a journey from control to influence. We start out with almost complete control of a child's life, but by the time our sons and daughters are eighteen, and ready to face life on their own, all we have left is influence.

This raises an important question: How exactly does influence work? It works like this:

We listen most to the people we love the most.

Our kids inevitably do what you and I do: they listen most to the people they love the most. This means that as a parent, you need to establish an authentic, healthy relationship with your son or daughter if you hope be an influence in their lives.

Influence is easy to lose but takes time to build up. Here are five easy ways to gain influence as a parent:

1. **Do what you said you were going to do when you said you were going to do it.** It cultivates trust, confidence, and even respect.
2. **Enforce limits.** Don't think you're helping your kids by letting them off the hook with commitments, boundaries, and responsibilities. One day, they'll thank you for it.

3. **Treat one another with kindness.** Treat the people closest to you with more kindness than anyone else. (It's natural, by the way, to do the opposite.)
4. **Don't overindulge your kids.** Let rewards be rewards. As a rule, you shouldn't give your kids rewards for nothing, or for simply doing what's expected of them.
5. **Work on your own character.** When your kids see you developing your faith and character, you will have a greater impact on their lives.

If you think about it, the people who are gaining influence with you are probably exhibiting some of the characteristics just listed. You love and respect them because they are responsible, kind, considerate people who stand for something and have a deep integrity. The people who are losing influence in your life are people who are inconsistent and emotionally unhealthy.

While it takes discipline to develop your character and stick to sensible limits as a parent, over time, it will help you gain and keep influence with your kids.

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