

Who Are the Men Who Have Had the Greatest Influence on Your Life?

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Michael: Now just to end it, we'll end with a lighter question. I had a bunch of people ask who were the greatest influences in your life as pastors, as men, as fathers when it comes to walking with Christ? Who has helped you the greatest?

Don: Are you talking about living? Are you talking about people from church history?

Michael: Whether it's someone from church history or someone living today or someone that was once in your life?

Don: Well, I've got to tell you, my closest friend and chief confidant was Bob Jennings. I did 9 or 10 conferences over a period of twelve years there in his little church there in Sedalia, Missouri. Our kids grew up together. When we would stay with the Jennings' during the meetings, I'd ask him questions when my kids were courtship age. I'd ask him theological questions, ecclesiastical questions. So we prayed a lot together. He was a beloved friend. Right before he found out he had pancreatic cancer, I said, "would you preach my funeral?" And in his way, Bob said, "Well, well, yeah." So, and then God takes him home before me. So Bob Jennings.

There's no doubt Paul Washer has had probably as much impact on me as Bob did. We've been alone together. He's bore his heart. He's the real deal. I'm telling you, I've seen incredible pressure, spiritual warfare exerted on him. He's never buckled because of the buoying of God's grace. It's all of God's grace. He would give God all the glory. And then there's an Arminian brother, his name is Harold Vaughn who's done multiple men's prayer advances, a tremendous communicator, evangelist that's also had an impact on me.

Church history, Michael, I could go on and on, but reading all the biographies I have over the last five years, I thought Whitefield - it warmed my heart when I read Whitefield, and then the new biography by Iain Murray on Jonathan Edwards. But I'll tell you, last year was significant. The four volume set of the autobiography of Charles Spurgeon had a deep impact on me. And it followed up with a two volume set of Martyn Lloyd-Jones by Iain Murray. It just blew everything away. Reading J.C. Ryle's biography, and as I mentioned today, now I'm into John Owen and reading Alexander Peden. All those guys, there's something in all of them for me. But I have to say that Spurgeon and Lloyd-Jones in church history have had the greatest, most lasting impact on my life. So those are the men that have contributed to where I am today. I am what I am by the grace of God because of Christ and God working in those men.

Tim: Well, there's a number of men, and I guess, one woman. And God used a book by John MacArthur, "The Gospel According to Jesus." So early on, John MacArthur was a tremendous

influence. Really, my seminary came from there. I probably received over a thousand, 1,100 probably tapes from his tape lending library and listened to all of them, some of them just over and over and over.

And then, the Lord moved me down to Texas and I sat under a man by the name of Pat Horner. And his faith was unusual. His leadership - he had a strong burden for missions, for church planting, that really was an impactful example in my life. And he threw out two names: Mueller and Hudson Taylor. And their faith definitely impacted me. And then he left. Kyle White came. Kyle asked me if I wanted to go to this conference of this guy named John Piper. This is when he wasn't very well known. He was just coming on the scene. And I probably went there about seven different years, read his books. Piper had a tremendous influence.

And then, I came into a season - and I'm still in that season - where Martyn Lloyd-Jones has just been a phenomenal resource. And I was at a low point, and his sermons on the book of Acts just blew wind through my soul. Lloyd-Jones and Spurgeon as well for me. Hudson Taylor. I've probably read his biography (incomplete thought). His faith has really impacted me. Those would be the folks in my life humanly speaking.

Mack: What they said. Iain Murray's books. If I could buy all his books and give them to every Christian in the world, I would. Every Christian ought to read all of his books. Iain Murray - his books. Lloyd-Jones on preaching. Leonard Ravenhill. Linda and I were privileged to be in his prayer meetings every Friday night for many years. And Conrad Murrell and Bob Jennings as well. Listen to Bob Jennings online. If you haven't listened to Conrad Murrell, contact me about reading his life. It's amazing - and I could name several others. The McLeod brothers - Bill McLeod, Keith McLeod. Mighty men of God. Unknown, but signs and wonders followed them. Meaning, everywhere they would go preach powerful conversions happened. They prayed four or five hours a day. Ravenhill, normally six hours a day. And so the power of God was on them. And that's why their legacy is still fragrant today. So, in all our lives, God will use individual Christians and maybe a pastor who is unknown, and he impacts you. Or maybe someone else - an author. So allow God to bring those influences. Because He uses those to shape our lives.

Don: I've got to say one more thing too. Tim just mentioned a moment ago. I just want to thank God for my wife. (incomplete thought) You talk about our kitchen table - table talk, talking theology. I'm talking about not casual, elementary theology, but also just practical simple things in regard to praying for our grandchildren and children. My wife has sharpened me so much. So she's one of my heroes.

Michael: You can clap for that.