

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, June 10, 2018

**Impress Them or Impact Them?
Week 3 in the series "Leave Your Mark"
A Study of Acts 14:1-21**

www.hillcrest.church



What is the difference between a thermometer and a thermostat?

In the following examples, identify whether the person is being a “thermometer” or a “thermostat.” Explain.

- ❖ Sandy is an upperclassman in the church’s youth group. She hears her peers mocking a younger member of the group when that person isn’t around. She persuades them to be more patient with the younger member and make the person feel welcome. The group agrees.
- ❖ James is a school teacher. He hears the cynicism and fearful predictions his coworkers make about the decisions of their school board. He contributes his own stories to the rumor mill, though he knows they are unfounded.
- ❖ After listening to her friend complain for several minutes about “things” at church, Jane commented she didn’t feel most of her complaints were based in fact and offered to go with her to see the pastor and ask questions.

Read Acts 14:8-13. What did the people think of Paul and Barnabas when they saw the miraculous healing?

Read Acts 14:14-20. After public opinion turned against Paul and Barnabas, what did the people do to Paul?

Have you ever had an experience when you lost popularity (or lost your chance at popularity) because you had to take a stand?

The lesson from Acts 14 is not that influencers should try to be unpopular. The lesson is that influencers should not make popularity our goal.

Read Proverbs 29:25. Pastor Tom mentioned four dangers when influencers worry too much about others' opinions.

Loss of Confidence

Read 1 Kings 19:1-4.

Why did Elijah run? Was he justified?

How do modern Christians "run and hide" and for what variety of reasons?

What does hiding indicate about confidence in the power and providence of God?

Loss of Courage

Read Galatians 2:11-13.

What force or pressure caused Peter to withdraw fellowship with the Gentile Christians at Galatia?

How do modern Christians try to live for the approval of others?

Loss of Credibility

Read 1 Samuel 15:1-3; 9-12; and 24-28.

Describe ways in which Saul went wrong and why.

What happened to God's anointment of Saul?

What are some ways fear of popular approval can cause church leaders to lose their authority to lead?

Loss of Convictions

Read Mark 15:13-15.

Pilate knew Jesus was innocent but bowed to public opinion. What were the possible motivations for Pilate to go against his convictions?

How can we stand strong on our convictions when pressured by others to give in?

Conclusion

Read Proverbs 29:25 again. Today we've looked at four dangers that come from worrying too much about others' opinions. What does Proverbs 29:25 say is the way to overcome this?

How does trusting the Lord help you overcome the fear of unpopularity?

Read John 12:42-43. Why were some of the people afraid to openly commit to Jesus? What fears of others' opinions did you have to overcome before you committed to Jesus? (If you're still considering a commitment to Jesus, what fears of others' opinions are you struggling with?)



Close with praise reports and prayer requests