WOW: Word Of the Week

Influencer

May 6, 2026

I recently read an article that contrasted influencers and disciple-makers. In today's social media world, many want to be influencers. Fewer seek to be disciple-makers. Jesus did not call us to be influencers, although he does expect us to use our influence for His cause.

Let's begin with a working definition. "An influencer is an individual who through a social media presence seeks to affect the decisions or opinions of others, especially in purchasing products related to fashion, beauty, travel, etc." Influencers succeed because of their knowledge, competence, and connections with their followers.

My topic concerns religious influencers. Influencers or disciple-makers?

Consider some contrasts.

Calling people to follow me or	calling people to follow Jesus.
Showcasing an artificial self or	exhibiting an anthentic self with transparency and vulnerability
Making it about exalting self or	making it about exalting God
Seeking my own well-being or	seeking the well-being of others
External influence or	internal life-change
Shaping opinions or	transforming lives

My favorite contrast! Focusing on the crowd and numbers or focusing on individuals. Disciple-making is personal!

Am I suggesting we should not seek to have and use influence? Not at all! Influence is a reality of life. Let us use our influence to have a lasting impact. Jesus calls us to see indlviduals. Disciples are made one by one. Make disicples who make disciples.

Disciple-making means walking aongside people in life's difficulties. Model and mentor, praising God in every situation. Live close enough to others to be an example. A leader is not a leader if no one is following. An influencer is not an influencer if people are not influenced. A disciple is not following Jesus' call is more disicples are not being made.

We are not called to bring glory to ourselves, but to bring glory to the Father. We are glory bearers, reflecting Christ's glory into this world.

I encourage you to evaluate how you invest yourself and your time. Point people to Jesus. Belief matters little without life-change. The demons believe and tremble. Those who follow the most visible influencers stumble when the influencer fails. Those who follow Jesus survive and thrive. The best I am can say is what Paul wrote. "Follow me, only to the extent that I follow Christ."