

Real Purpose

There is a little cemetery in central Arkansas where several generations of my wife's family are buried. It's near the town of Marshall, and it's called Canaan Cemetery. There are no famous people buried there, but there are folks living in the nearby hills who can tell you about many of the people whose names appear on the markers. However, a lot of the graves in that old cemetery contain the remains of people who have been long forgotten--people who lived their entire lives and no memory remains except the faded stone that marks their final resting place.

I don't know about you—I want my life to make a difference. Only I am not so concerned about an epitaph on a tombstone in a quiet field. I want my epitaph to be written on the hearts of those whose lives I have impacted. I want to be someone who influences others.

Recently, I have had meetings with several different successful businessmen who have all said to me, “I wish I could do what you do. I just can't seem to find any satisfying purpose in what I do.” Each of them were thankful for their jobs, but wanted something more fulfilling. Have you ever felt that way about your job? Do you lack purpose in what you do?

The truth is there is purpose to be found in whatever you do. It involves making a difference in the lives of those who work for and with you. It is about real influence. It is called life-changing leadership.

I firmly believe that influence is the highest level of human ability. It is the difference between

just having the title “parent” and actually molding a life. It is that which differentiates between imparting information and really teaching. It is the difference between being someone’s boss and shaping the possibilities of a future leader. It is the distinction between taking up space and really making your life count. Meaningful influence brings validation to our lives.

Leadership is all about others. Life-changing leadership is about helping others succeed. It is making a meaningful impact in someone else’s life.

How do you become a person of influence?
How do you lead with life-changing leadership?

Over the years I have observed many leaders. A few had a significant impact in my life. Sadly, far too many were bad examples. Still, they taught me valuable lessons about leadership.

What are the characteristics of a life-changing leader? What does it take to make a difference?