



INFLUENCER: A Bi-Vocational Priesthood

Pastor Derek Sanford

August 3, 2025

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- Look to your left. Going around the circle, share one person or place the person to your left has influence and why.

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

Scriptures & Questions:

- [Summarize the story of Joseph](#) (found in Genesis 37, 39-50) and how he was an example of an embedded influencer.
- Read [Daniel 6](#). How do you see Daniel's impact as an embedded influencer?
- What qualities do Joseph and Daniel have that help them make an impact?
- Read [Colossians 3:23](#) and [Romans 12:1-2](#). How do these verses influence the ways that you view your work? Why is God's view about work essential for everyday life?
- What does it look like for you to do your work as unto the Lord, instead of working for men?
- What is one practical change you can make to think of your work as an embedded influencer? How can the group help hold you accountable?

Tool/Practice: This month, we are focusing on the Embedded Influencer [My Impact Tool](#). Each week, give time for your group to work through a portion of the tool and share with the group. This week's suggestion is to introduce the tool through [this video](#). Turn to the second page and focus on the **WORK** boxes. Fill in the description of your workplace and some unique needs and opportunities there. If you are retired or between jobs, think about a place where you "work" as a volunteer.

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

What is God saying to you about your influence through work?

What are you going to do about it? "I will..."

Pray: Share and pray over the needs and opportunities at work and ask for wisdom about your influence there.



INFLUENCER: Knowing How God Made You

Pastor Derek Sanford

August 10, 2025

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- How has God used you as an embedded influencer since our last meeting?
- **Pray** for awareness of opportunities and the faithfulness to follow through.

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

Scriptures & Questions:

- Review [Exodus 31:1-7](#); [35:30-36:2](#). What about the sermon and how the Spirit equipped and used Bezalel and Oholiab stuck out to you?
- Read [Ephesians 2:10](#) and [Psalm 139:13-16](#). What do these verses say about you?
- What is easy or hard to believe about yourself from these verses? Why?
- What might change if you truly believed the things from these verses and lived them out?
- Read [Romans 12:3-8](#); [1 Corinthians 12:4-7](#); [1 Peter 4:10-11](#). What do we learn about spiritual gifts from these verses?
- What are some of your spiritual gifts? How have you seen God use them? (If people in your group don't know their spiritual gifts, encourage them to take The Real You survey at <https://therealyou.org/>.)
- What might be your next steps in using your spiritual gifts in an "ordinary" area of life? If you don't know, brainstorm as a group to encourage each other to grow.

Tool/Practice: This month, we are focusing on the Embedded Influencer [My Impact Tool](#). Each week, give time for your group to work through a portion of the tool and share with the group. This week's suggestion is to review the first page and circle the **Capabilities, Core Values, and Spiritual Gifts** God has given you.

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

What is God saying to you about how he created you? What are you going to do about it?
"I will..."



INFLUENCER: The Power of Encouraging Words

Pastor Derek Sanfor

August 17, 2025

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- When was the last time you received an encouraging note from someone, and what was your response to receiving it?
- From last week's sermon, how did learning or remembering that God chose you, made for a purpose - & given gifts to achieve that purpose, impact your thoughts and actions this week?

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

Scriptures: [Hebrews 10:23-25](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:11](#); [Acts 4:36-37](#)

Questions:

- Recall a time when you received encouragement from another person (Heb 10:23; 1 Thes 5:11). How did it impact your perspective on the situation?
- How important is "sincere, specific, strengths-focused" encouragement to you?
- Share your response to one of life's most recent challenges or discouragements where you were unswerving (Heb 10:23) or more like Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37). What helped you maintain that response?
- Derek combined generosity and encouragement to "create stable platforms for others to grow." Share an example of when you created this stable environment for someone, and what were the results?

Tool/Practice: This month, we are focusing on the Embedded Influencer [My Impact Tool](#). Each week, give time for your group to work through a portion of the tool and share with the group. Turn to the second page this week and focus on the **LEARN** boxes. People in the middle of learning something new need lots of encouragement to keep going. Fill in the description of spaces where you learn (or your family learns) and some unique needs and opportunities there.

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

What is God saying to you about being the voice of encouragement?



What are you going to do about it? Consider Derek's next step: Write one (sincere, specific, strengths-focused) note of encouragement this week to someone where you live, work, learn, and play.

"I will..."



INFLUENCER: The Power of Catalytic Questions

Pastor Derek Sanford

August 24, 2025

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- A. Share about the most inquisitive adult you know. How does their curiosity impact your conversations? How do you feel when interacting with them?
- B. (alt) Has God ever asked you a question? What did you learn about Him from that interaction? What did you learn about yourself?

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

- In her book *Time to Think*, Nancy Kline stated, "The mind resists commands and responds to questions." Do you agree with that statement? Why or why not?
- Read [Matthew 6:25-34](#)
 - o Identify all the questions that Jesus asks in this passage. Reread the passage, leaving out the questions. How do you think this affects the interaction? (consider pace, engagement, tone) How do you think the questions help his audience? How do they challenge them?
- Read [Luke 2:46-49](#)
 - o Jesus was found asking questions of the temple leaders. What role did His questions play in this scenario?
 - o How did Jesus respond to His parents' rebuke when they found Him there? How does that interaction differ from His dialogue with the teachers? How is it similar?
- Pastor Derek described the hierarchy of question types and how Jesus chose the right type of question to progress each scenario: closed questions (where, which, when, who...) can be answered with a single-word response; *what/how* questions open space for reflection and invite the person to share more; and *why* questions probe motives and core beliefs. Are you comfortable being asked *why*-type questions? Why or why not? What inhibits you from asking deeper questions of others?
- Think about your prayer times. How often do you ask questions of God and pause for His response? What changes in your heart and mind when you engage with God this way rather than simply listing your concerns and requests? How can practicing this relationship rhythm with God help you communicate meaningfully with people?

Tool/Practice: This month, we are focusing on the Embedded Influencer [My Impact Tool](#). Each week, give time for your group to work through a portion of the tool and share with the group. This week's suggestion is to turn to the second page and focus on the **PLAY** boxes. It is easy to forget the power of



questions in the middle of play. Fill in the description of spaces where you play and some unique needs and opportunities. If this is challenging, choose a few questions you could ask the next time you “play”.

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

- Identify one person in each area of your life (where you live, work, learn, play...) that you sense God leading you to engage in deeper spiritual dialogue. Brainstorm one or two thoughtful questions you might ask each person to open the conversation or better understand their perspective on a topic you already know you believe differently. This week, challenge yourself to replace one spiritual monologue with one of your thoughtful questions.

What is God saying to you? Who are the people God wants you to engage with through questions?

What are you going to do about it?

“I will...”



INFLUENCER: The Power of Presence

Pastor Derek Sanford

August 31, 2025

Life Group Discussion

CONNECT: *Make time for encouragement, relationship-building, and prayer.*

- Who in your life knows you best? What about them allows you to be your most authentic self with them?

GROW: *Engage with God's word, one another, and the Dream Disciple tools and practices.*

Scripture: [Isaiah 7:14](#); [Matthew 1:23](#); [John 1:14](#)

Questions:

- Before we consider what it means to be present with people, let's examine these scriptures and an excerpt from the [Nicene Creed](#). What does it mean that God is present with us? Why did Jesus come to live with us?
 - o "For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man."
- Derek used the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well ([John 4:1-43](#)) as an example of a biblical encounter between God and people. What are some other encounters in the scriptures between God (Father, Son, or Spirit) and people?
- What do we learn from these encounters about being present with people?
- What prevents you from being fully present with someone at home, work, school, etc.?
- Derek identified three disciplines we need to develop to be present: Slowing, Noticing, and Listening. Which one of these is the most challenging for you?
- Let's brainstorm:
 - o How can we slow down and press pause amidst the busyness?
 - o How can we develop the discipline of noticing, seeing beyond the surface?
 - o How can we be better listeners, creating space for stories?

Tool/Practice: This month, we are focusing on the Embedded Influencer [My Impact Tool](#). Each week, give time for your group to work through a portion of the tool and share with the group. This week's suggestion is to turn to the second page and focus on the **LIVE** boxes. Fill in the description of spaces where you live and some unique needs and opportunities there.



PRAY: Use the ACTS prayer model to prompt your prayer time. Adoration: Praise God for his presence in your life. Confession: We are not always aware of God's presence, nor the power of our presence in others' lives. Thanksgiving: Thank God for the people in your life who slow down, notice, and listen. Supplication: Ask God for direction and discernment on your next small step of obedience in this area.

GO: *Put your learning into practice and hold one another accountable.*

What is God saying to you?

What are you going to do about it?

"I will..."