

HOW LONG IS YOUR SHADOW

Acts 5:15 – People bring out their sick... Peter's shadow

I have a little shadow
That goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him
Is more than I can see.

What use is a shadow? Seems as nothingness cast on a sunny day...

In India a high caste Brahman – throw away food if shadow of outcast,
an untouchable passed over it...

Yet people tried to get in the path of Gandhi's shadow...

Completely superstitious but symbolic of something that is very real.

We all cast a shadow that heals or hurts... helps or harms...

- Your shadow is your influence – the effect you have on others
 - You cannot keep from casting a shadow or influence
 - Your influence goes in and out with you like a shadow
 - You cannot throw a rock into water without ripples
 - You cannot put a person into any sphere of life...
 - We are all affected by someone's shadow...

Childhood influence prank! (just consider fads)

John 21:3 – Peter goes fishing... And the others...

- Ripples, shadows... How long is your shadow?

4 Truths about shadows

1. Influence Is Always Positive

- You may not be positive... may be negative... neutral
- Influence is never neutral... always has an effect.
- Matthew 12:30 – “not with me, is against me”
- Not to choose is itself a choice

2. Influence Is Mostly Unconscious

- Much more than visible to the eye
- We can wield influence intentionally... but most is not... short intentional spurts cannot make up for years of...

- Boy learning to drive... yells at another driver... "Did I do it right dad?"
- It is why we sometimes expect too much from the church regarding our children... Cannot overcome in one day what child experiences everyday at home

3. Influence Is Almost Immortal

- Has a lasting quality...
- Once exerted it moves on down the stream of life
- From one person to the next influence keeps going
 - The shadows only get longer
- Jesus chose this method to reach the world with the gospel

4. Influence Is Always Irrevocable

- Once exerted it cannot be changed or recalled
 - Can change nearly every other aspect of life
- Like the law of the Medes & Persians...
 - Can start new – try to change my influence – but cannot take back
 - Like the start of a brush fire...