Clips from Psalms
Psalms 102:23-24
Prayer of an Afflicted One for Mercy on himself and on Zion.

"He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: Your years are throughout all generations."

How Important is a Love for Truth?
BY STAN COX, ON MAY 23RD, 2012

How important is a love for truth? This is a legitimate question as we live in a culture that champions the concept of relativism. In the view of many, ultimate or actual truth is not attainable, at least not in spiritual matters. So, personal and subjective feelings (sincerity) have replaced the search for objective truth, as the standard of acceptability to God.

However, though men do not believe an adherence to truth to be of any great importance, a simple consideration of scripture shows that God does. Consider the following:

1. **Love for God is paramount.** Consider Jesus’ words, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:37-38).

2. **But, Jesus defined love in a very specific way.** “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

3. **His commandments (truth) is found in scripture.** “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
To rightly claim a love for God, we must keep His commandments. Since He has revealed His will for man in the Holy Scriptures, it is there we will find truth. What is truth? Jesus prayed to the Father, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” How important is a love for truth? Very! It is required! Do you have an encompassing love for the truth of God?

Introduction:
The word influence means “the power to sway or affect based on prestige, wealth, ability, or position” (AHD 660). Jesus pointed out the importance of influence in the Sermon on the Mount when He said to His disciples, “ye are the salt and light of the world” (Matt. 5:13-16). Each individual Christian has the responsibility to see to it that they influence the world, other Christians, and family members in such a way that all would bring glory to the name of God.

I. The Christian’s Influence toward the World:

A. Jesus depicts the Christian as the “salt and light” of the world (Matt. 5:13-16).
   1. Salt is used for both seasoning and preserving food.
   2. Metaphorically, salt represents the influential quality a Christian may have on others.

B. Secondly, the Christian can influence the world by setting a good example:
   1. Those of the world are watching our every move and so there is opportunity (Phil. 2:14-16).
   2. I can cause one in the world to give glory to God by my actions (Matt. 5:16; II Pet. 2:11-12).
   3. The Christian is the conscience of the world and so they will be judged for not turning a hearing ear to the Christian (cf. I Pet. 4:1-6).

II. The Christian’s Influence toward Other Christians:

A. Elders serve as an example to other Christians (I Tim. 3:7).
B. Deacons serve as an example to other Christians (I Tim. 3:10, 13).
C. Evangelist serve as an example to other Christians (I Tim. 4:12).
D. Teachers of the gospel message are looked to for an example of godly living (Heb. 13:7).
E. All Christians who live godly in Christ Jesus serve as an example to other Christians (I Thess. 1:6-8).

III. The Christian’s Influence toward Family:

A. Grandparents and parents set valuable examples for children to follow (II Tim. 1:3-5).
B. Husbands and wives commanded to set examples for each other (I Pet. 3:1-7).

Conclusion:

The Christian must be aware of his surroundings. The souls of men and women may be eternally affected by my actions. Individual responsibility demands that the Christian be kind, gentle, not easily provoked or provoking others to anger. When I let those of the world get to me and I lash out I have lost my influence. When I allow a brother in Christ to frustrate me to the point of lashing out I have lost my influence. When I lash out at my wife or her at me we have lost our influence with one another. Once an influence is lost it may be difficult to regain yet each should certainly try.