

*Influencing Culture – Week Two***Patterns of Cultural Influence in the Old Testament***Selected Scriptures*

**Introduction:** The premise of this series on *Influencing Culture* is that biblical culture-change is always local, personal and done in the context of community. We influence culture because we've been created for this (Gen. 1:26-28), and because this is an expression of common grace (Matt. 5:45). But to gain a concrete vision for how to influence culture we need specific examples. This week and next week we will examine patterns of cultural influence in the Bible. Here are four patterns for influencing culture based on the Old Testament.

1. ***THE NEEDY* – When we serve those who are in need, we engage in positive cultural influence. *Leviticus 19:9-10; Deuteronomy 24:19-22; Ruth 2:7-9***
  - A. God commanded Israel to think about the poor when they harvested their fields.
  - B. God gave motivations for his command.
  - C. The timeless principle: We are to make a portion of our income available to the poor.
  
2. ***ADVERSITY* – When we experience adversity, we can transform it into positive cultural influence for others. *Genesis 39:19-23***
  - A. Joseph's tragic story
  - B. Joseph's attitude in jail
  - C. The timeless principle: In times of adversity, we can "make something of it" to bless others.
  
3. ***LEADERSHIP* – When we're placed in positions of secular leadership, we can engage in positive cultural influence. *Daniel 1:1-21***
  - A. Daniel's story
  - B. Daniel's career
  - C. The timeless principle: God can use us – *even in the most awkward secular situation* – to bring in a microcosm of his grace.
  
4. ***ARTS* – The arts are an extremely powerful way to express truth in dark and difficult places. *Exodus 35:10-19; 36:1-4; 37:1-29; 38:22-23***
  - A. Israel's situation:
  - B. God's solution: He raises up a group of artists. Exodus 35:30-35; 36:1-4
  - C. The timeless principle: The arts are a way to convey God's truth at a deep emotional level.
  
5. ***THE APPLICATION* – The O.T. teaches us that cultural influence is often a godly response to the immediate situation in which we find ourselves.**