

Kawartha Lakes - 2026 - John Reiner - Influencers

Good afternoon, everybody.

Is there a way to tighten this? Can you hear me okay? Yeah.

Thank you very much, Eric, for that nice introduction. A little bit of a different approach to services than I'm used to, but I enjoyed it. I absolutely love comments by Tina, I think. That was very good. She used some Old Testament proofs that it's not against the law for

women to speak in the church. That was very good. I enjoyed that and also Stefan. That was quite

well done. I think one thing to point out is you have to always be careful when you're trying to maybe put a doctrine in that's built off of one verse. You must be very careful about that.

I like to also dig in. to background, find out what's going on in the church at the time.

So I perceive, and as I'm delivering this message today, just so all of you know, it's like my personal study, and I'm just sharing that with you.

If I ever say anything that might be a little bit off, because I perceive that there's some knowledge in this room, some biblical knowledge, and I always assume that all of you know more than

I do. That's my assumption. So that's where I'm approaching this from.

And so, yeah, does everyone have a handout? I printed out a handout.

So most of that has just got a lot of the verses that I'm going to be looking at today as I deliver this. So this is going to be about influencers.

And in times past, before the advent of Internet, influencers were usually people that excelled at something or were famous in some other way. Their status could be exploited by someone to the

effect that people, as far as buying something, are making a statement politically. The first thing that comes to mind is someone famous being used in maybe a TV commercial to increase sales of a

certain product. So influencers, by definition, promote something by use of it or recommending it.

Now, something that came into my mind, I mean, I was a bit of a hockey watcher back in the day, and

I'm going back now into the 60s and 70s. There was a fella, and some of you may know his name,

Bobby Orr. Everybody knows Bobby Orr. Well, if you don't, you should. So he's a famous hockey

player, and he's involved, and some of you might remember this, with a pen company, Bic, Bic Pens.

And so he was showing, or basically the company was showing, like, if the pen could stand up to

Bobby Orr's dreaded slap shot, I mean, then it would be absolutely good enough to be for your schoolwork or for work. So what they did is they got this contraption, and they attached one of the

Bic pens to it, and he'd just go to town on that, like slap shot after slap shot after slap shot.

And when he came up, they took the pen off his stick, and they wrote on a piece of paper. And, of course, it wrote. I think they wrote the word Bic. Pretty clever, right? And their comment or their slogan was, writes first time every time. That was Bic's slogan. Do any of you remember that commercial? That's like stuck in my mind. I could never get rid of that. So that's kind of a little bit of an example of an influencer. So I've got a few others here that I can give you. There was a fellow named Ambrose Burnside, and he was a union general in the American Civil War. He was a governor and a senator of the state of Rhode Island. So he wore his hair in a very funny way. He kind of had it, maybe not hugely long, but he let his hair grow here, and he kind of cut it off. Some of us may remember from the 70s, like our parents maybe had these big sideburns. So this is where sideburns came from, from Mr. Burnside's. They were originally called Burnside's. And it got changed to sideburns later on. The next guy that I'm going to mention is William Dorsey Swan. Now this one, this one's a little bit, I didn't even know if I should put this in here, but I did because it's kind of a big deal today. William Dorsey Swan, he held regular drag balls in 1888. This is 1888. He wore a gown and he had dozens of black men dressed in gowns the same way. So it was looked at a little differently back then. They called the police and almost everybody ran. But of course he stuck around. So his protests against societal norms of the times and referring to himself as a drag queen has had a huge influence on where that culture has progressed today. I'm sure you guys have all seen it, and it's kind of a little bit sad, but you can get a room of kindergartners and, you know, you have a guy dressed up in a funny way. I'll just leave it at that. And some of these guys are influencing our children. The next one I'm going to mention is Coco Chanel. I'm pretty sure everybody has heard of Coco Chanel. French designer from the 1920s. So at that time, maybe previous to that, it was looked at a little bit differently. tan like if you had a tan back then you were basically looked at somebody that's working out there so your skin should be pale and white so you're sitting in the house and enjoying yourself that's what rich people did and as a matter of fact i think if you go back to royalty and stuff they would actually powder themselves so they'd look extremely white and that was that was the norm of the time and she had gone out on a on a sailboat journey with somebody and i guess they took pictures of her she got a wonderful tan and This just took off. So today it's the exact opposite. I mean, if you've got white pasty skin like me, you're kind of looked at as a bit of a, you know,

loser. You have to have that Greek god tan, as they say. Greek god tan.

So influencers today are a diverse mixture of celebrities, content creators, and emerging personalities. Some examples are Chris Brown, and he's an R&B artist. Kay Poirier, a TikToker known for her activism. an approach to content creation, C.T. Jones, a fashion influencer, Cristiano Ronaldo, Selena Gomez, Kylie Jenner, and many, many more. So, I mean, if most of you are like me, and I'm actually happy to say this, I don't know very many of those people. And the only reason I know anything about them at all is when I was preparing this message, I was looking for people that would maybe influence other people, and their names came up.

So, in my own life, I'd have to say the biggest influencer for me would have been my father. And I

think for the majority of you, you'd have to say that your parents probably had a pretty big influence on your life, especially when you were younger in those formative years. And so the question that begs is, who influenced our parents? And while thinking about that, another question popped into my mind. Would Jesus be considered a major influencer today? And so one particular thing that makes me wonder about someone being extremely popular... resulting in influencing people while another could just basically wander around for his entire life not being noticed at all and disappearing into obscurity. So once again, I ask myself, who influenced our parents or grandparents or great-grandparents? And, you know,

depending on what you believe, I mean, you might have a different answer. So every one of us believes in something, whether it's a political leader, a sports star, an educational figure, something or someone spiritual. Those of us claiming Christianity would say that Jesus is the one

whom we're influenced by. walk as he walked. With a little over 2 billion Christians worldwide, do we do that? Is Jesus the biggest influence in this world?

Is he the one we look to for guiding our daily lives and modeling our behavior after? Or maybe there's something else that influences our behavior and actions throughout our lives. Something that is stealthy and covert that is able to affect our thoughts and actions on a subconscious level. Something that can broadcast a message on a level that is almost always in tune.

to human listening, our physical mind. Of course, I'm referring to Satan and his innumerable wicked

assistants, the demon realm. So at this present time, they have control of this physical world and do all of their influencing on a spiritual level. In the 12th chapter of Revelation, in verse 9, I should have that on your sheet, it says, And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the

earth and his angels were thrown down with him. So we find ourselves inhabiting this world as physically humans, not alone, but together with a hidden force that is determined to ruin everything, resulting in the destruction of life. As Christians, most of us are aware of this and hold on to our faith as a hope to combat the enemy. The problem is that the enemy is cunning and

very good at camouflaging himself as a friend rather than a foe. The Apostle Paul speaks of this to the Corinthian church as something to be aware of and on guard against. In 2 Corinthians 11, 14 to

15, it says, No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

Therefore, it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds. So if I were to conduct a bit of a survey and ask maybe even a lot of Christians,

going to think this. But if I was to conduct a survey and ask people what they thought the devil looked like, I'm pretty sure most of the answers would be this guy with a red suit on and a tail and a pitchfork. It's pretty much what everyone would say. But that's a far cry from what Paul's describing. The reality is far scarier than fiction. The devil would more aptly be described as a clean-cut businessman in a three-piece suit with a million-dollar smile. On top of that, Satan's biggest deception is that most people don't think he exists at all. But if you want, and I didn't put this down your sheet so you can write it down, and I'm sure a lot of you have been

there and know it, but in Ezekiel 28, 13 to 19, you can get a pretty good description of what the guy looks like.

So as I mentioned earlier, Satan is controlling things on Earth. His radio station is transmitted on a frequency that the majority of the people on this planet have selected for easy listening.

This is alluded to by Paul as he wrote to the people in Ephesus. That's Ephesians 2 verses 1 to 2. And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you formerly walked according to the course

of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. This is a continuous bombardment of subliminal messaging by Satan for

168 hours a week.

And I've said this to other people as well, and I'm saying this to myself. If I'm not putting the word into my mind on a daily basis, regularly, what are you getting bombarded with and what's going

into your brain? It's going to be from the other guy. So what can we do to resist or fight back against such a prominent foe? James, who was the Jesus brother, speaks about this situation. He's trying to make us aware of the nature the devil possesses and is passing on to us feelings of covetousness, lust, pride, these things which God absolutely hates.

These things bring about hatred, ill will towards our fellow man. And James proposes a change in

attitude and action in the fourth chapter in verses 7 to 8 where he says, Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.

Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. And Paul speaks to the

people in Ephesus about we all as Christians face on a daily basis and what we can do about it. He mentions the world's greatest influencer, Satan, as the God of this world.

In Ephesians 6, 10 to 12, it says, Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the full armor of God so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the

devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. So what is this armor of God and how can it help us defeat this wicked evil spirit? Well, that's described in Ephesians 6 verses 14 to 17 and it starts out with a belt. that you're supposed to put on. It's called the belt of truth. So what's the purpose of a belt? We're probably, all us guys are wearing belts today. We know what the purpose is. Keep your pants

up. That's what it does. So just like it holds up our pants, and without it, everything would fall down, truth is the thing that holds everything together for us. And that's the part. It's the belt of truth. The problem being, what is truth? Humanity wants to know what truth is, and where can we find it? God answered that for us, speaking through John in

the 17th chapter of the gospel in verse 17, where it says, Sanctify them in truth.

Your word is truth. That's your Bible that's right in front of you. And also in Psalm 119, verse 160, it says, The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous ordinances is everlasting. So just like a belt holding our clothing up, truth holds up our faith.

and prevents us from being fooled by all of Satan's lies. The next item that you're strapping on is

the breastplate of righteousness. So a breastplate is an important piece of armor that would protect the individual's vital organs, such as the heart and lungs. With this piece missing, a strike to that area would prove fatal. Spiritually speaking, this piece of armor protects a believer's heart and moral character from deception and evil. Being that it is a breastplate of righteousness, I think we have to define what righteousness means. We find that in Psalms 119, verse 172, where it says, Let my tongue sing of your word, for all your commandments are righteousness. So speaking of the Ten Commandments that were given at Mount Sinai.

All of Psalm 119 is about the importance of God's commandments,

and the writer is striving to keep them. As a side note, The whole psalm is an acrostic poem of 22

stanzas following the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Within a stanza, each verse begins with the same Hebrew letter. So I found that kind of interesting, so I stuck that in there. So the Ten Commandments of God equate to righteousness. Next we come to our footwear. That's your shoes or

your boots, which is another piece of equipment. And without it, we could injure our feet. And if

that would happen, we no longer move about freely and would be open to attack. Our mobility being

compromised would result in falling beneath the attacking force of the enemy. Paul equates the Christian's footwear to spreading the gospel of peace. Making this determination seems to indicate

that we must continually be engaged in spreading the good news of the coming kingdom of God.

Ignoring this would result in our becoming lethargic with our Christianity and developing a very

Laodicean type character. So I know all of you here know that, and you probably read through the churches, the seven churches in the book of Revelation, where the Laodicean one is the very last

one, and that is probably not where we want to be. So I think that's Revelation 3, if I remember correctly. So you can check that out on your own and read that, because it's kind of important. It's almost a list of what not to do. Anyway. Isaiah speaks of the importance of spreading the gospel and how it will ultimately bring about happiness. In Isaiah 52,

verse 7, it says, How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation and says to Zion,

Your God reigns. Next, we have a shield that we must carry. This is a defensive tool that allows the carrier to protect his entire body from all sorts of weapons, including swords, spears, hammers, and of course arrows. It's the ultimate defensive piece that allows us some amount of safety while giving a certain amount of boldness for attacking. In spiritual terms, Paul refers to it as the shield of faith. It's our faith in God and his Holy Son, Lord Jesus Christ, that allows us to, as Paul put it, extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Without our faith the attacks of Satan will set our life on fire resulting in destruction. The importance of faith in our lives can be explored in the 11th chapter of Hebrews and I'm not going to go there but that's another place that you can read all about faith and how it should work

its way in your life. In verse 6 of that chapter it speaks of how important faith is.

Hebrews 11 verse 6 says, And without faith it is impossible to please him. For he who comes to God

must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him. So the next piece of armor that we're going to be putting on is the helmet. And the helmet's a very important one, as it

protects the most important organ, I think, that we probably have, the brain. And not only is the helmet used in military exploits, but also in sports and leisure. Everyone recognizes the importance of protecting the head from hits and impacts. Spiritually speaking, Paul calls the helmet of salvation, which symbolizes the confident assurance and hope of eternal life, protecting us from enemies, attacks, doubts, and deceit that he hits us with.

It is put on through faith, prayer, and the reading of God's word. Isaiah speaks of this in the 59th chapter in verse 17. It's kind of a prophetic description of Jesus putting on spiritual armor. It says, he put on righteousness like a breastplate and a helmet of salvation on his head. And he put on garments of vengeance for clothing and wrapped himself with a zeal as a mantle. And

the last piece that we have is the sword, which is the only really full attacking weapon that we have, a piece of armor. The sword can be used to defend yourself against attacks.

but is most importantly used to do attacking and force the opponent to capitulate. Spiritually speaking, Paul refers to the sword as the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, or the Bible, once again, that you have with you today. It's our source of truth, and the means by which we can educate the ignorant and also refute those who misuse it. In the book of Hebrews,

chapter 4, verse 12, we have a description of this wonderful book. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. So not only can you use it to correct others, but maybe more importantly, you can use it to correct ourselves. So I'm just going to take something here now and rub a little bit of an... You know, they say that... sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words. And you know, I don't know who actually said that, but I think it originated in the 1920s. And actually, I think the guy's name was Fred Barnard, but I can't remember. He's the one that originated, and I think it's worthwhile. So if I came in here today like this, you guys notice something different about me now, right? You must. You know, if I would have walked in here like this, well, I don't think I would have got out of the house this morning. I think that Sandy and Stefan would have said something, right? But to be honest, I have this piece of tape on my head now, but I don't know it. I don't know it. I can't see it. You all look the same. It's me that looks different. This piece of tape represents faults in our character and also sin. Sometimes we're blinded to that and we can't really see it. So what do I have to do? I mean, you all could tell me, but sometimes we don't tell each other what's wrong. And it's a delicate situation anyway. Some people don't take that very well. But we do have a tool. And I'm going to use this. It's a mirror. I look there, and I go, whoa, that looks stupid. So I'll take it off. This represents the Bible, the Word of God. And it helps me to see what's wrong with myself. Because like I said, you know, I'm doing this as a personal study and I know there's a lot wrong with myself. And I always assume, once again, that all of you know a lot more than I do. So this is, and also, you know, as I was going through this, there's a place actually, I think it's in James in the first chapter and you guys can check that out. I can't remember the verse. It's in the 20s where Paul is talking about doers of the word. Hears of the word and doers of the word. And he uses a mirror or reflection that someone is looking at. And then he goes away and he immediately forgets who he was. So it kind of goes in line with this a little bit. So that was my little example of something. So when Jesus went off into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan for a full 40 days, not having any food or water, he was at his weakest point towards the end, like at the end of that 40 days. And Satan bombarded our Lord with many attacks, calling into question his identity, offering him worldly glory, and of course pointing out that, you know what, you're hungry. You need to eat. So as he was going through all of that, Jesus just used scripture to refute Satan on every single one of the times that Satan came after him. He used scripture to refute him. And that's something that

we should probably take into our own lives and use the same way. So earlier on, I had wondered if Jesus would be considered an influencer, as some would use the term today. And to be honest, if I was going to answer it, I would have to say probably not. It should be, but, you know, many Christians would say absolutely. You know, Jesus is the biggest influence of today. But there's a very small percentage of the world population. Well, you know, maybe with Christians, if you have two and a half billion out of eight billion, that's not too bad. As Sabbath-keeping Christians, if I was to ask you how many Sabbath-keeping Christians, what percentage would it be out of the 8 billion? What would you guess? It's actually .003%. It's not very much. So, I mean, it could hardly be considered as an influence. in the worldly climate that we're living in. Just before Jesus' crucifixion, he told his disciples that Satan is the ruler of this world. In John 14, verse 30, he says, I will not speak much more with you for the ruler of the world is coming and he has nothing in me. So the ruler of this world is the true influencer of it. His fruits are listed in the fifth chapter of Galatians. These things listed out are the character traits that motivate and drive this world. unfortunately leading to destruction. So if we read through it, and it's not a great list. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you. that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. So the majority of humanity isn't interested in being influenced by our Creator, but find entertainment and pleasure in all of these terrible sins. In reality, they don't stand a chance unless God would step in to enlighten them. Good news is that that very thing will eventually happen, and God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh, as explained in the second chapter of Joel in verse 28. It will come about after this that I will pour out my spirit on all mankind. And your sons and your daughters will prophecy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. So the greatest news is that the biggest and most effective influencer of the past 6,000 years will be locked away while the majority of all the people who have ever lived, I'm thinking, will probably accept the gift of salvation upon repentance and be influenced by God. And his son Jesus Christ. And the Holy Spirit. I mean that's something that I believe. I know there are a lot of people that disagree with that. But I think sometimes we underestimate the love that God has for his children. All of us. And I think in a lot of cases. If you read through. In the message today as Eric was going through it. And we were discussing

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Corinthians 14. I mean if you read 1 Corinthians 13. And I think that's something that I read.

at least a couple of times a week. You know, you can have all the knowledge in the world. You can know all the prophecy, which I don't think we do. You can go on and on. But if you don't have love in your heart, and we don't show it to each other, not just to these people in the room, but to everyone else, and you don't do that, then we're really missing out. So that's all I have for you. And thank you very much for listening. And I'm looking forward to the next message and the fellowship later. And peace and blessings to all of you.