

I don't remember the name of the young man who was my summer camp counselor back in June of 1972. But I certainly remember the impact that he and the other counselors had on my life during that week at Central Oak Heights.

The reason I remember the impact of that young man is because he helped me to take the first step in becoming a disciple of Jesus.

In a real sense, any of you who have been impacted by what I do now as a pastor owe a debt of gratitude to that nameless young man because that's how far reaching the impact of one person can be.

While there are certainly other people that I could name who have been a tremendous influence on my life; there have been other unnamed people who have had an impact on my life.

Just because someone is unnamed doesn't mean that their impact isn't important. As a matter of fact there are a lot of people whose names we do not know but who have impacted our lives.

Let me do a little test this morning to show you what I mean. I'll say a name and we'll see how many of you know the impact of their life.

I'll start with an easy one. Joseph Lister. Yes, Listerine is named after him, but that's not the impact he left on all of us. You remember his name when you use mouth wash, but do you know what impact he had in the world.

Joseph Lister revolutionized medical care by developing and championing the use of anti-septic to stop the spread of infection. Not only did he start telling doctors to wash their hands and wear a clean pair of gloves when they went from patient to patient but he used carbolic acid to stop the spread of germs.

This one might be a little more contemporary. Tim Berners-Lee. Very few of you will know the impact of this man but I bet a number of you have him to thank for something you did this morning. Let me give you a clue. Have you been on the world wide web?

Well, if you've ever pointed your web browser in any direction down the information superhighway, Tim Berners-Lee is the man who created the www.

Let's try one more name, Thaddeus. Not Thaddeus Stevens, played by Tommy Lee Jones in the movie *Lincoln*, just Thaddeus. Ok, in case you don't know Thaddeus, let me give you a hint by naming some of the people he is associated with: Peter, Andrew, James, John...getting it yet? Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

Thaddeus, like some of the other lesser known disciples of Jesus isn't very well known; but the impact of Thaddeus and these disciples of Jesus have been changing the world for 2,000 years. It seems strange that a man who is only listed four times in the entire New Testament had any impact; but Thaddeus was one of the 12 who spent 3 years with Jesus and eventually helped to carry the message of Jesus to the ends of the earth.

Luke 9:1-2, 6

You may not readily know the name of Thaddeus, but you know his impact.

So that leads me to the point I want you to remember today: *Don't worry if they don't remember your name; worry if they don't remember your impact.*

Now there are a lot of people who prefer to remain nameless; and that is ok. Every organization, the church included, has its front people- the people who are the public face of an organization. They are the people who everyone sees. It was even that way with the disciples. Everyone knows Peter, but very few know Thaddeus.

But if you ask the people who are out front, they will tell you that it is the people who operate behind the scenes; the people whose faces you rarely see who make everything work on a day to day basis.

We have lots of those nameless people around here. The media people, the hospitality people, the nursery staff, the Sunday school teachers, the people who print, fold and assemble the bulletin, the cleaning people... You see I may stand up here each week as the public face of Linglestown Life; but I know that I wouldn't be here, and more importantly, our ministry wouldn't make the impact that it does without all those other nameless people.

Bill Yeager, who was our office manager for many years, always told me that his job was to make me look good. And I can tell you honestly that Bill did that in many ways. Just one example would be all *his* thoughts and ideas that made it into many of the messages that I shared during the years that Bill was here. Many of my messages had his thoughts woven throughout them. I couldn't have done many things, not just preaching, apart from the work that Bill did to make me look good.

So there are lots of people who prefer to remain nameless - working behind the scenes; and that is ok because they are making an impact. But I fear that for some who prefer to remain nameless; their quest for anonymity also means that they never make an impact.

And that's just not the way God intended for the church to work. Paul used the human body as an illustration of the church in 1 Corinthians 12; reminding us that every part of the body is essential. Every part of the body, everybody in the church, is essential- you have an impact to make!

What I want to make certain of today is that no one leaves here today without realizing that they can make an impact; that all of us understand that *the Best Impression is a Lasting Impression.*

Don't worry if they don't remember your name, worry if they don't remember your impact.

You see the beauty of the church is that everyone has a place, a place to get involved, a place to serve, a place to make an impact. And whether anyone ever knows your name; everyone should know your impact.

Time and time again people walk into Linglestown Life and they are impacted by one thing, our hospitality. I hear people all the time remark about how warm and welcoming we are as a church. I hear people talk about the homemade cookies and treats that are available along with the coffee and other drinks.

You need to know something, every church thinks they are friendly; but this church does friendly better (most of the time) than any other church I've ever set foot inside.

Why do we have that impact? Because someone decided that if no one ever knew her name, they would know her impact. If you've been here less than a year, chances are that you didn't know Janie Gardner. You know her impact, but you don't know her name- that is unless you've been in Janie's Place and seen her name up on the wall.

You see, years ago Janie, who wasn't really a 'get up in front of people' person discovered that her gifts could have an impact on the church. And as a result Janie made an impact that has lasted beyond her life. *The Best Impression is a Lasting Impression*. I can't think of anyone who better fits that expression.

[By the way, how many of you know the names of the people who will stay today after everyone else leaves and make sure that the coffee pots are washed, the tables are cleared and the vacuum cleaner picks up the crumbs off the floor? See, just more of the wonderful, nameless people who are making an impact!]

I've been saying it all morning and I'm going to say it again: Don't worry if they don't remember your name; worry if they don't remember your impact.

So here's what I need you to do today; I need you to decide that today will be the day you start making a lasting impact at Linglestown Life. You don't have to wait until you decide to join the church, you don't even need to have all this church and faith stuff figured out, you just need to act today on what I'm about to ask you to do.

If you remember at the beginning of the service I told you to make certain you had your Response Card in your hand at the end of the sermon today. Well now is the time you need to take that out. And if you don't have one in your hand right now we have some people who will bring one around to you. So I'll wait a moment until you have your Response Card ready.

Just so we are clear, everyone, regardless of your age, what you think about your abilities to make an impact here at Linglestown Life, or any other limitation you think exempts you from doing what I'm about to ask you to do; everyone has a response card in their hand.

Now the first thing you need to do is make certain that your name is clearly printed on the response card along with a means by which we can contact you- email, phone number.

Now turn it over and find the list on the back of the of the response card. Read that list and decide that you are going to make an impact in one of these areas.

If you want to serve in hospitality, check that off. That means that you might be a baker, or a server, or a 'cleaner-upper.'

Some of you need to step up and help serve in our ministry to children. Maybe you are going to make an impact as a teacher; maybe you can take a turn as a teacher's aide, or serve in the nursery. And we've got Life Camp coming up this summer for which we need lots of servants! Or, maybe you can help with youth on their Summer Friday Service projects.

Maybe your impact is in the field of Media. We always need people who can learn how to run slides or do sound. But maybe your talent lies in producing media like the images we use on Sunday morning or creating videos.

Some people here this morning know that they are called to lead a Bible study or a small group. So mark the spot that says 'Small Groups.'

I don't know where you are interested in making an impact, but I want you to write something on that response card about how you want to make an impact.

Maybe you are willing to greet people at the front door or out in the parking lot. Maybe your impact will be during the week working with the Café ministry to Nursery School families [setting chairs in FLC] not just a Sunday morning. The list is only limited by your imagination. So even if you don't see something on that list, write down the way you want to make an impact.

Now here is what is going to happen with information you just wrote down. This week, before next Sunday, someone is going to follow up with you and give you an invitation to get involved. We are not just going to throw you to the wolves, we are going to let you get your feet wet by walking along side someone so that you can see how it is done.

Now comes the hard part. Someone is going to come around as we close the service and collect your response card. That's the hard part because when you hand that paper over you are making a commitment to make your best impression a lasting impression.