

Sermon Series: I<sup>2</sup> – Living Lives of Irresistible Influence  
Title: A Life of Representing  
Text: 2 Corinthians 5:20-21  
Date: June 29, 2008

1. Opening Illustration: ***How to become a United States Ambassador***

2. Define what an ambassador is/does...***Definition...***

- a. Often lives in a foreign land rather than his/her home
- b. Speaks on behalf of represented entity – like speaking directly to the President of the United States – does not speak on behalf of himself while in official capacity
- c. Represents his country in both words and actions
- d. Not self-appointed, but appointed or confirmed by others

3. 2 Corinthians 5:20-21

*We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

4. What qualifies us to be Christ's ambassador?

- a. Originally created in God's image – Genesis 1:26-27  
*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*
- b. Sin marred that perfect image. But Christ reconciled us to the Father through His blood (2 Corinthians 5:17-19) *If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.*
- c. It's nothing that we have done, but rather what God has done in us.

5. Duties of our ambassadorship:

- a. Live in a foreign land, rather than our home – Philippians 3:20-21  
*But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*
  - i. Do you recognize that your life is temporary, that your home is not here?
  - ii. How does your life reflect that?
- b. Be the voice/representatives of the Kingdom – Christian witness
  - i. St. Francis of Assisi said, "Preach the Gospel always, when necessary use words."
  - ii. Thomas Merton, a Catholic monk in the mid-1900's, said nothing is more revolting than "pious talk." We are not called to be walking tracts but living words of God.
    1. Do your words and actions reflect the fact that Christ resides in you? When? At home? At work? Or just at church?
      - a. Examples:
        - i. Marriage – argument
        - ii. Work – shady business deal

- c. Live our lives with Christ in our heart and expect the world to judge us our faith, our church and God according to our actions

- i. Illustration: **President William McKinley**

6. Another meaning of ambassador – “Minister of Reconciliation”

*Think about western Europe after the Second World War. American ambassadors were called upon to implement the Marshall Plan, which greatly helped to bring about the economic recovery of that area. In Roman times, an ambassador (same word) was appointed to areas which had been newly conquered, and was charged with the responsibility of bringing that area fully into the Roman Empire.*

- a. The “therefore” in 2 Corinthians 5:20 – Christ reconciled us to God, He now uses us to share the Good News of reconciliation
- b. God uses us to bring new people into the Kingdom
  - i. Who is God currently sending you to be an ambassador/Minister of Reconciliation to?

7. A Life of Representing

- a. God has appointed us His ambassadors
- b. We are qualified to be God’s ambassadors because of what Christ did on the cross and that He lives within us now
- c. We receive our directives from God through the Spirit and His Word
- d. Minister of Reconciliation - God uses us as witnesses to His Love to grow His Kingdom

## 8. How to become a United States Ambassador

1. Focus your collegiate studies on politics, history, and develop a proficiency in at least one foreign language. Attend as many foreign policy conferences as possible and network.
2. Apply for an undergraduate fellowship with the Council on American Ambassadors.
3. Consider taking a post graduate fellowship or full degree in international relations.
4. Apply for an entry position in the State Department. A typical entry level position would be a foreign services officer.
5. Continue to develop your linguistic skills. The foreign service has a linguistic institute that teaches 27 different languages, and entire courses are offered online. Learn as many languages as you can, but focus on one or two in which you can develop a speaking fluency.
6. Move through embassy levels and foreign service postings until your seniority and experience earn you an ambassadorship.
7. Skip the preparation and foreign service experience. Become active in a political party. Contribute lots of money. Ask for an ambassadorship.

From eHow.com ([http://www.ehow.com/how\\_2099905\\_become-united-states-ambassador.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_2099905_become-united-states-ambassador.html))

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### Definition of Ambassador

**ambassador** |am<sup>1</sup>basədər; -ɪdôr|  
noun

an official envoy; especially : a diplomatic agent of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government or sovereign as the resident representative of his or her own government or sovereign or appointed for a special and often temporary diplomatic assignment

an authorized representative or messenger

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### Illustration: *President William McKinley*

“But in all things commending ourselves...by kindness,...by love unfeigned.” 2 Corinthians 6:4, 6

When William McKinley was President of the United States, he had to make a decision about the appointment of an ambassador to a foreign country. Two candidates were equally qualified, so while McKinley was still a Congressman, he had observed an inconsiderate action by one of the men. He recalled boarding a streetcar at the rush hour and getting the last vacant seat. Soon an elderly woman got on, carrying a heavy clothesbasket. No one got up to offer her a seat, so she walked the length of the car and stood in the aisle, hardly able to keep her balance as the vehicle swayed from side to side. One of the men McKinley was later to consider for ambassador was sitting next to where the woman was standing. Instead of getting up and helping her, he deliberately shifted his newspaper so it would look like he hadn't seen her. When McKinley noticed this, he walked down the aisle, graciously took her basket, and offered her his seat. The man was unaware that anyone was watching, but that one little act of selfishness would later deprive him of perhaps the crowning honor of his lifetime. - H.G.B.

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