

# Companions: Friend or Foe?

## Lesson 6

### Companions: A Part of Life

- A. From the time of Adam and Eve, the Bible is filled with examples of friends, companions, associations, and even enemies. Companionship and interaction with other people is truly a part of every person's life.
- B. There are times when interaction with other people can be a benefit and times when the influence is detrimental to one's spiritual well-being. Consider some examples of companionship or interaction between people, as seen in the Bible.
  1. Consider some negative examples.
    - a. **Adam and Eve.** Eve gave Adam the fruit and he did eat. (Genesis 3:1-8)
    - b. **Abraham and Sarah.** Sarah told Abraham to take Hagar as his wife. (Genesis 16:1-6)
    - c. **Jacob and his mother Rebekah.** Rebekah told Jacob to deceive his father, Isaac. (Genesis 27:1-29)
    - d. **Sons of Jacob.** The sons of Jacob influenced each other in regards to their hatred towards Joseph as well as how to get rid of Joseph. (Genesis 37:1-36)
    - e. **Samson and Delilah.** Delilah manipulated Samson into revealing the secret of his strength. (Judges 16:1-20)
    - f. **Solomon and his many wives.** Solomon married foreign women who influenced him to lead Israel into the worship of idols. (1 Kings 11:1-8)
    - g. **Rehoboam and his advisers.** Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, listened to the poor advise of the younger generation. (1 Kings 12:1-15)
    - h. **Herod and the daughter of Herodias.** The daughter of Herodias influenced Herod to give her what she requested: The head of John the baptizer. (Mark 6:14-29)
    - i. **Jezebel of Thyatira and the young Christian men.** Jezebel influenced the young Christian men to engage in fornication. (Revelation 2:18-29)
  2. Consider some positive examples.

- a. **David and Jonathan** – David and Jonathan provided comfort and strength to each other during David's difficulties with king Saul. (1 Samuel 20:1-42)
  - b. **Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus** – Queen Esther influenced King Ahasuerus to save the lives of the Jews. (Esther 3:1 - 8:17)
  - c. **Paul and the household of Caesar** – Paul appeared to have been a good influence on the household of Caesar. (Philippians 4:22; cf. Acts 28:30-31)
  - d. **Brethren and Paul** – *“And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.”* (Acts 28:15)
- C. Within our own lives, there are many influences at work. All forces of influence have the same potential of either leading us towards God or leading us away from God. Consider a few examples:
1. Family members, such as parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, in-laws, etc.
  2. Neighbors
  3. Friends and best friends.
  4. “Boyfriends” and “girlfriends”
  5. Spouses.
  6. Co-workers.
  7. Acquaintances

### **Companions: The Sorting Process**

- A. Solomon warned his sons regarding the influence of other people upon their lives. Consider the following examples:
1. *“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.”* (Proverbs 12:26)
  2. *“He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.”* (Proverbs 13:20)
  3. *“Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.”* (Proverbs 14:7)
  4. *“A violent man entices his neighbor, And leads him in a way that is not good.”* (Proverbs 16:29)
  5. *“He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.”* (Proverbs 20:19)
  6. *“Make no friendship with an angry man, And with a furious man do not go, Lest you learn his ways And set a snare for your soul.”* (Proverbs 22:24-25)
  7. *“Do not mix with winebibbers, Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;”* (Proverbs 23:20)

8. *“Whoever keeps the law is a discerning son, But a companion of gluttons shames his father.”* (Proverbs 28:7)
  9. *“Whoever loves wisdom makes his father rejoice, But a companion of harlots wastes his wealth.”* (Proverbs 29:3)
  10. *“Whoever is a partner with a thief hates his own life; He swears to tell the truth, but reveals nothing.”* (Proverbs 29:24)
- B. We must remember the danger of wicked influences.
1. Evil companions corrupts good morals or manners. (1 Corinthians 15:33)
  2. One will suffer as a companion of fools. (Proverbs 13:20)
  3. Some influences will attack the word of God. (2 Peter 2:1-2)
  4. Some influences will appeal to the lusts of the flesh or “sensual passions” (2 Peter 2:18; ESV).
  5. Wicked influences can turn you into a slave to sin. (cf. Romans 6:16)
- C. We must learn to recognize the differences between wicked influences and godly influences.
1. Look to Jesus Christ as an example. (1 Peter 2:21-23)
  2. Look to the examples of the apostles. (Philippians 3:16-17)
  3. Look to the examples of those who suffered and persevered. (James 5:10-11)
  4. Look to brethren who are living and serving the Lord with the utmost faithfulness. (ex. 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8)
  5. Look to those who are striving to be holy and perfect (or complete). (cf. Matthew 5:48; 1 Peter 1:15-16)

### **Companion: Rules to Remember.**

- A. Avoid companions who would encourage you to set wicked things before your eyes. (Psalms 101:3)
1. **Vanity and worthless things.** Turn your eyes away from “worthless things.” (Psalms 119:37)
  2. **Pornography, nudity, and immodesty.** Make a “covenant” with your eyes. (Job 31:1; Proverbs 6:25; Matthew 5:28)
  3. **Alcohol and Drugs.** Do not look upon wine for it can likewise be alluring. (Proverbs 23:31-35)
  4. **Covetousness.** Some people set their “eyes and their heart” on sin. (Jeremiah 22:17; cf. Colossians 3:5)
  5. **Remember.** Those who shut their “eyes from seeing evil” will “dwell on high. (Isaiah 33:15-16; cf. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18)
- B. Avoid the influence of those who fall from the Lord. (Psalms 101:3)
1. This requires an attitude of heart. (Psalms 97:10)
  2. Abhor what is evil. (Romans 12:9)
- C. Avoid companions having a “perverse heart.” (Psalms 101:4)

1. The idea of perverse is that of false (distorted) or deceitful. Therefore a “perverse heart” would be a heart that is false or deceitful.
  2. One's service to God must come from a true heart of honest faith, loyalty, devotion and obedience. (Mark 12:29-30; cf. 1 Timothy 1:5)
  3. A false or perverse heart is an abomination to the Lord. (Proverbs 11:20)
- D. Avoid companions who speak slander, lies, and deceit. (Psalms 101:5a, 7)
1. Christians are to speak truth. (Ephesians 4:25)
  2. Christians are to turn away from those who slander. (2 Timothy 3:2-5)
    - a. *“For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, . . . unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, . . . And from such people turn away!”* (2 Timothy 3:2-5)
    - b. All liars will spend eternity in hell. (Revelation 21:8)
- E. Avoid the influence of companions who are haughty and proud. (Psalms 101:5b)
1. Such arrogant attitudes will lead a person into self-service motivation and away from a selfless service to the heavenly Father. (cf. Psalms 10:2-4)
  2. Saints are to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. (1 Peter 5:6)
  3. God will exalt those who are truly humble in heart. (Luke 18:14)

## Conclusion

- A. Give thought to your companions, your friends, your associates, etc. Now, ask yourself two questions:
1. Which of my companions will help me to go to heaven?
  2. Which of my companions will try to pull me away from my faithfulness to God?
- B. Recognize the danger that lies in ungodly influences and determine to turn away.
1. If it is not possible for you to escape from those in your life who exert a negative influence, then determine today to allow your faith in God to be a wall of protection.
  2. Using the strength of God found within His word, exert your own godly influence upon the ungodly who live within your life.